

Docket: T2739-906589

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of	:	Confirmation No.: 7855
	:	
Helen MCINTOSH	:	Examiner: Dmitry SUHOL
	:	
Serial No.: 09/661,447	:	Group Art Unit: 3712
	:	
Filed: September 13, 2000	:	
	:	
For: System and Method for Enabling	:	
Conflict Resolution	:	
	:	McLean, Virginia
	:	November 30, 2004

RULE 132 DECLARATION OF HELEN B. MCINTOSH

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Declarant, Helen B. McIntosh states as follows:

1. I am the sole inventor of the subject matter disclosed and claimed in application Serial No. 09/661,477 filed September 13, 2000.
2. Exhibit A submitted herewith is a copy of my Curriculum Vitae.
3. Since 1993, I have been involved in interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution.

I have worked for years as an inner city counselor in impoverished situations, including physical and sexual abuse as well as domestic violence. I have experienced first hand the conflicts children face in school from being bullied or teased. In January 1999, after a rash of school shootings broke out, I began thinking about the profile of such shooters and why they would commit such terrible acts. I recalled a

counseling principle – when a child sees violence, unless there is some kind of intervention or repatterning that child will end up committing violence. In April of 1999, the Columbine school shootings occurred and I noted commonalities among the school shootings. I note that they had been victims of bullies, and that they had been teased and taunted and lacked the skills to say “stop” and were disconnected from their families. As a result, they committed the ultimate act of bullying or violence.

In September of 1999, I conceived the idea of my invention in the middle of the night, an event which I believe was divinely inspired. That fall I introduced the concept to teachers at the Roan school in Dalton, Georgia. In the summer of 2000, with the help of a friend, Carol Sutton Lumpkin, who was a financial planner and had 25 years of marketing experience, we formed a company, The Peace Rug, Inc. to commercialize my invention. A major rug manufacturer Shaw Rugs was licensed in 2000 to manufacture the product.

4. As noted in my dissertation, Exhibit B submitted herewith, several researchers recognized that the bullying in schools is a serious problem that can lead to serious academic, social and emotional problems. I have, in connection with my doctoral dissertation conducted an extensive review of publications related to conflict resolution. None of the publications reviewed disclose or suggest my invention as described and claimed in the subject application. Pages 103-108 of my doctoral dissertation, Exhibit B, provide a list of the publications reviewed.

5. My “vision” in 1999 led me to conclude that there was a tremendous need for a simple tool in each classroom that assists students in learning needed communication skills.

6. I have found that a central problem in schools is that children are disconnected from their families and peers resulting in prior conflict recognition skills.

7. I have also concluded that there is a need for students to learn to communicate effectively with a peer, even if this peer is a bully.

8. According to my invention, students are provided with a safe and special place in the classroom where they can dialogue with one or more classmates and quickly settle conflicts.

9. Know programs and models for dealing with resolving classroom conflicts suffer in the complexity and lack of practical approach and generally fail to give direct opportunity to students to learn and use the skill themselves to find their own voice.

10. As a result of my research, I developed an effective process, named “The Peace Rug” process, which utilizes a simple two part-teaching tool.

11. The first part of the tool is a rug, which is small in size, portable and has quiet tones supportive of the overall concept embodied by the label “The Peace Rug”, the trademark under which the product is sold. Upon placement by a participant in the conflict process, the rug defines a specific control area or conflict resolution area.

12. The dimensions of the rug are such that participants in the conflict resolution process must convene in face-to-face relationship.

13. The second part of the tool is a script for use in association with the rug by the participants involved in a mutual interpersonal conflict. The script provides instructions and suggests a dialogue designed to encourage a mutually satisfactory resolution of the conflict.

14. The educational tool, which forms the backbone of the "Peace Rug Process", is licensed for manufacture by Shaw Rug, a division of Shaw Industries, the largest carpet manufacturer in the world.

15. The article as manufactured by Shaw Rugs is a relatively soft, plyable and rectangular nylon rug or carpet with a printed cloud design on its top face and having a dimension of 39"x56". The front face is designed with quiet tones for instilling a feeling of serenity. A script is attached to the backing of the rug. The rug is rolled into a roll and packed in a see-through plastic wrapper or container, Exhibit C submitted herewith is a sample of the article as manufactured by Shaw Rug and sold to consumers. Exhibit C2 is a set of written instructions attached to the backing of the rug in the package. Exhibit C3 is an audio tape, providing instructions in English and Spanish, also enclosed with the article as sold.

16. The invention as embodied in Exhibit C and as described and claimed in the subject application has enjoyed tremendous success throughout the United States and Canada.

17. Exhibit D submitted herewith represents true copies of testimonials from the following teachers:

- a. Dr. Elanor Fall, Loudon Country Day School, Leesburg, VA.
- b. Elaine Tillman, Community Resource Specialist, Springfield, MO.
- c. Gloria Jenkins, John Johnson Elementary School, Bainbridge, GA.
- d. Elaine Davis, Brookwood School, Dalton, GA.
- e. Richard Slidon, North Georgia Elementary School, GA.
- f. Ron Ward, Dalton High School, Dalton, GA
- g. Dr. Amy Haynes, Whitfield County Schools, Dalton, GA.
- h. Linda Higgins, Roan School, Dalton, GA.

- i. Janice Griffin, Park Creek School, Dalton, GA.
- j. Betsy Thomas, Roan School, Dalton, GA.
- k. Kandace Carter, Park Creek School, Dalton, GA.
- l. Leigh Watson, Ringold, GA.
- m. Michelle Lively, Brookwood Elementary, Dalton, GA.
- n. Cindy Parrott, Roan School, Dalton, GA.
- o. Jan Gowan, Park Creek Elementary School, Dalton, GA. and
- p. Traci Hanks, Westwood Elementary, Dalton, GA.

18. Exhibit E submitted herewith are eight narratives relating to students experiences of students using my invention. Sixty (60) students were interviewed under strict guidelines during research for my doctoral dissertation. The balance of narrative from the student interviews can be found in my dissertation Exhibit B, Appendix M.

19. Exhibit F are testimonials from parents whose children used my invention.

20. Exhibit G is a copy of a letter from the Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals announcing the selection of my invention for the School Bell Award and advising that as a winner my invention will be showcased at the Fall Principal's Conference (2002) at Pine Island Resort, Lake Lanier.

21. Exhibit H is an announcement published for the Dalton Whitefield Chamber of Commerce, November 2000 to the effect that the invention will be included in the Young Attitudes line from Kathy Ireland Home.

22. Kathy Ireland is the CEO and Chief Designer of Kathy Ireland Worldwide. On the inclusion of my invention in her Young Attitudes collection commented on my invention – "it's simple, powerful and something the world really needs". See Exhibit I.

23. Exhibit J is a copy of a page from the Shaw Rugs catalog promoting my invention as “a wonderful, innovative tool” and showing the face design of the rug as manufactured by Shaw Rugs.

24. My invention for commercial sales is linked to the website of Shaw Corporate Web Sites and specifically the website for Shaw Living. Exhibit K is a printout of the Shaw Living website showing my invention linked under “THE PEACE RUG”, the trademark under which my invention is sold.

25. The invention of the subject application is marketed by the Peace Rug, Inc. Exhibit L submitted herewith are copies of the website of The Peace Rug Inc. including one page showing endorsements by William Glaser, M.D., a world renowned psychiatrist; Frankie Beard Principal of Roan School in Dalton, GA., Dianne Casey, Principal of Canterbury High School in Montgomery, AL; AND Connie Holleman, Counselor at Westwood School in Dalton, GA.

26. Exhibit M is a copy of an article which I authored from Parent Life, August, 2002, describing my invention.

27. My invention has been the subject of many published articles. Exhibit N is a collection of clippings from the following publications:

- a. The Daily Citizen, June 2, 2002;
- b. Hollins College, Alumni News, Winter 2002;
- c. Agnes Scott, Main Events, Winter 2002;
- d. Georgia Trend, September 2002;
- e. The Post-Searching, August 28, 2002 and
- f. GSCA Journal, Fall 2002.

28. The North Georgia Electric Membership Corporation furnished 26 elementary schools in their seven-country service area with my invention. Exhibit O

submitted herewith, is a copy of its publication The Customer Connection announcing the gift and publicizing my invention.

29. My invention is also featured by Toy Director.com, Inc. and Exhibit P submitted herewith is a copy of a page from the toydirector.com website.

30. Exhibit Q is a further article on my invention appearing in PR Web, Press Release Newsurre.

31. In 2004, Best Vacation Children's Products selected my invention to be among its 2004 Best Vacation Product Winners. Exhibit R is a printout listing the winners.

32. Exhibit S is my article titled "A Patch of Blue" published in Guideposts in 2003 under its magazine section called "Pass It On" People Helping People".

33. Exhibit T is a printout of the website page from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau National Campaign called "Take a Stand, Lend a Hand, Stop bullying Now" which includes The Peace Rug as a resource.

34. I have reviewed the prior art noted by the Examiner and find that none of the prior art references disclose or suggest my invention as described and claimed in my application for patent Serial No. 09/661,447.

35. In the extensive prior art research I did in connection with my doctoral thesis, I did not find any prior art which employed my method, teaching tool or products as manufactured by Shaw Rugs.

36. In view of the foregoing, I believe my invention provides a practical solution to a long felt need in connection with addressing and interrupting negative behavior among children in classroom environments.

This is the extent of my Declaration

I declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001, Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patents issued thereon.

Date: 11-28-04

By: Dr. Helen B. McIntosh
Helen B. McIntosh



COVER PAGE
INDEX OF EXHIBITS

- A. Copy of Curriculum Vitae**
- B. Dissertation**
- C. Sample of the Article**
- C2 Written Instructions attached to the backing of the rug in the package**
- C3 Audio Tape**
- D. True copies of testimonials**
- E. Eight narratives**
- F. Testimonials from parents**
- G. Copy of a letter from Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals**
- H. Announcement published for Dalton Whitefield Chamber of Commerce**
- I. Young Attitudes line from Kathy Ireland**
- J. Copy of a page from Shaw Rugs Catalog**
- K. Shaw Living Website**
- L. Copies of the website of the Peace Rug Inc.**
- M. Article from Parent Life, August 2002**
- N. Collection of the Clippings**
- O. A copy of publication "The Customer Connection"**
- P. Page from toydirector.com website**
- Q. Article from PR Web, Press Release Newsurre**
- R. Printout listing winners**
- S. Article "A Patch of Blue"**
- T. Printout of website from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration**

A

CURRICULUM VITAE
DR. HELEN B. MCINTOSH
Fall 2004

Work:

Roan School
1116 Roan Street
Dalton, GA 30721
706-876-4395

Peace Rug Corporate Office:
706-272-0200 phone
706-226-2296 fax

helen@peacerug.com

Summary of qualifications:

Counselor: School Counselor for Dalton Public Schools

Instructor for: Staff Development/Professional Learning, "Active Parenting Program," "Can We Talk?" and William Glasser Institute International Conferences

Coordinator: Monthly Quality School meetings and parenting meetings

Developer: The Peace Rug® presentations - regional, state, national, and international conferences

Inventor, writer, and publisher: The Peace Rug® curriculum; www.peacerug.com; and GLAD (Growth, Leadership, And Development) Day Conference, a drug-free lifestyle conference for community elementary students now in its 16th year

Education:

Doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology
University of Sarasota
Sarasota, FL

Specialist degree in Guidance and Counseling
West Georgia College
Carrollton, GA

Masters of Education degree in Guidance & Counseling
West Georgia College
Carrollton, GA

Certification in Choice Theory & Reality Therapy (RTC)
The William Glasser Institute
Chatsworth, CA

BA in Psychology
Hollins College
Hollins, VA

Accreditation:

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

National Certified Counselor (NCC)

Certified in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy, 2000

Professional experience:

1993-Present: Elementary School Counselor, Roan School, Dalton Public Schools, Dalton, GA

1996: Staff Development Instructor - Managing Students in a Quality Way

1993-95: Basic and Advanced Weeks, and Basic and Advanced Practicum for The William Glasser Institute

1988-93: Elementary Coordinator, Drug Free Schools Program, developed and implemented programs for 19 schools in Dalton Public Schools and Whitfield County, GA

Patents and publications:

The Peace Rug® Curriculum Kit containing Special Instructional Brochure and Audiocassette; www.peacerug.com website; The Peace Rug® fliers; and information sheets

Presentations at School Conferences and Civic Organizations:

"Fabulous Fifteen Adaptations for Youth-At-Risk"

Featured Speaker at National Youth-At-Risk Conference, March 2004, Savannah, GA

"Non-Coercion and Grace: Choice Theory/Quality Management/Reality Therapy and Quality Principles in Relationships for The Faith Community," and "Are You New To Choice Theory & Reality Therapy & Quality School Principles? Here Are Over Sixteen Adaptations To Help In An Elementary School!" William Glasser Institute and School Consortium Joint Conference, July 2003, Kansas City, KS

"Child Care Interventions That Work!" Georgia Child Care Association, April 2003, Atlanta, GA

"Classroom Interventions That Work," Dalton State College Conference "All About Children," February 2003, Dalton, GA

"More Than A Dozen Show-and-Tell Ways To Teach Quality School Principles/Choice Theory/Reality Therapy in An Elementary Setting" and "Mind Map of Choice Theory/Reality Therapy/Quality School Principles," International Glasser Quality School Consortium Conference, October 2002, Sacramento, CA

"Do You Want The Answer To School Discipline?" Georgia School Counselors Association, November 2001, Athens, GA

"Innovative Techniques for Building Meaningful Relationships", 11th Annual National Youth-At-Risk Conference, Savannah, GA, March 2000

"Building Powerful Relationships," International Quality School Consortium Conference, October 1999, Boston, MA and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Annual Conference, March 1999, San Francisco, CA

International Quality School Consortium Conference, October 1998, Vancouver, B. C. and Dalton Public Schools Student Services, January 1998

International Quality School Consortium Conference, October 1997, Austin, TX

"How to Manage Students in a Quality Way," Staff Development for Dalton Public School System (10 SDU Hours), July 1997

"How to Implement the Quality Philosophy at the School Level," International Quality School Consortium Conference, October 1996, St. Paul, MN and also for The Next Generation School Conference, Macon, GA, February 1996

"The Counselors Role in Implementing Quality Schools," Georgia School Counselors Association (GSCA) Fall Conference, Savannah, GA in 1995

International Quality School Consortium Conference, Oregon, October 1995

Speaking engagements for The Peace Rug:

"The Peace Rug®," Diversity in the 21st Century/The Georgia Project Conference, Dalton, GA

"The Peace Rug®," International Glasser Quality School Consortium Conference, October 2001, Orlando, FL

"The Peace Rug®," 3rd Annual Governor's Conference, September 2001, Nashville, TN

"The Peace Rug®," 2nd Annual Southeast Regional Character Education Conference, June 2001, Chattanooga, TN

"The Peace Rug®," Dalton State College, Center for Continuing Education, May 2001, Dalton, GA

"The Peace Rug®," 1st Community Conference on Violence, January 2001, Dalton, GA

"The Peace Rug®," International Quality School Consortium Conference, October 2000, Detroit, MI

"Communication Based on Grace," Fellowship Bible Church, August 2000, Dalton, GA

"The Peace Rug®," SE Conference for Choice Theory, Reality Therapy, and Quality Management, May 2000, Montgomery, AL

"The Peace Rug®," International Conference of Choice Theory, Reality Therapy, and Quality Management, Chicago, IL, January 2000

Other professional activities:

Parent meetings for the last eight years throughout the school year

On-going Staff Development at my school site and other schools on the subject of Quality School principles and "The Peace Rug®"

Have traveled throughout the Southeast as Speaker for Christian Women's Club Luncheons and After-Five groups from 1974 to the present

Leadership:

CEO, The Peace Rug Company, Inc.

Currently coordinator and leader for Quality School monthly meetings at Roan School, Grade Level Chair

Former Leadership Team Representative, Leadership Dalton, Dalton-Whitfield Chamber of Commerce.

Professional memberships:

American Counselors Association

American School Counselors Association

Georgia School Counselors Association

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Georgia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Recognitions:

Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals (GAESP) Banquet Program, to receive the state School Bell Award, November 2002, Pine Isle, GA

Media experience:

Articles submitted and published:

"A Patch of Blue," Guideposts, February 2003

"Resolving Conflict," ParentLife, August 2002

Radio interviews:

"Jess In The Middle" Show, WHBL, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 2004

"Speak Your Mind" segment with Yankee Dave & Matt, KKOY, Chanute, KS, April 2004

The Michael Dresser Show, on-line radio for east and west coasts:

www.themichaeldressershow.com/guests.htm, March 2004

Live radio show in Nebraska, March 2004

Penelope Tzougros' Show "Risk Comes to Radio," WBIX, Boston, MA, January 2004

Simone Mason's show "The Electric Drum," WYBC, Milford, CT, September 2003

Jessie Frees' Show "New Jersey Connection," WMTR, Cedar Knolls, NJ, September 2003

"Rhett Palmer Show," WAXE, Vero Beach, FL, July 2003

Television:

"Community Events," WTNB, Chattanooga, TN, September 2002

"J. W. Bray Show," WDNN, Dalton, GA, January 2001

Numerous interviews on various Chattanooga TV stations on how The Peace Rug solves the problem of teasing and bullying at schools

(Please see www.peacerug.com for updates to these mentions)

Community activities:

Bible teacher

Adult Sunday School teacher

Volunteer Counselor at Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC)

Northwest Georgia Girls' Home

Co-founder of Amigos de las Familias, a grassroots collaboration to assist Northwest Georgia Latino families

Northwest Georgia Region Boy Scouts of America, Board of Directors

EXHIBIT B

Doctoral Dissertation of Dr. Helen B. McIntosh. Because of bulk, this item is submitted separately.



THE PEACE RUG®:
ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND VALUE AS A
CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOOL

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Faculty of Argosy University at Sarasota
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

by

Helen B. McIntosh

Argosy University at Sarasota

Sarasota, Florida

May 2003

Dissertation Committee Approval:

Dr. Jim Reynolds, Chair	date
Dr. Mike Dubi	date
Dr. Marilyn Highland	date

EXHIBIT C3

Audio tape of script for “The Peace Rug”



Testimonials from Teachers on The Peace Rug®

Dear Peace Rug Friends,

I am writing to let you know that we are using The Peace Rug in our school library with much success. We do not "walk" on it, but have it in a safe place where it can be put out for ready use; where we can spread it out, sit down and talk together. Some Kindergarten students experienced difficulty on the playground one day, and told their teacher that they needed to go to the Peace Rug in the library. The two girls came and sat down together and were able to work out their differences and went away hand in hand. Later that day the teacher came to see what The Peace Rug was all about. She may be purchasing it for next year to have in her class. It is my hope that the children themselves will spread the word. Today a Third grader told me that he found your website online!

Thank you for helping us all in an effort toward peace.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eleanor Fall, Librarian, Loudoun Country Day School, Leesburg, VA

Dear Carol:

I wanted to follow up with you in regards to our usage of the wonderful Peace Rug! We have been using the rug to help children with disabilities and behavior issues. The rug has given many children a chance to learn and solve problems. This has been a wonderful resource and tool to help children with conflict issues. I have seen several children find peace when they use the rug and have observed so many intense moments become a time of love. There is a corner in our Family Resource Center for this time for children to use the Peace Rug. The rug has shown so many children a way to dissolve their anger, work on communication skills, way to control unwanted behaviors. I just wanted to share this information with you and how things have been going. The Peace Rug has given children a way to cope with the storms they face and has kept them safe until they can work out their own plan! This has been a special opportunity and I look forward to keeping in touch with you and if I can send any further information, please let me know. Thank you so much for all that you do!

Sincerely,

Elaine Tillman, Community Resource Specialist, Springfield Regional Center, Springfield, MO

Docket: T2739-906589

"I was glad to see The Peace Rug® recently featured on the front page of your paper. A Peace Rug® was donated to John Johnson Elementary School by Mrs. June Faircloth some weeks ago, and it has been used on several occasions. While it is no magic wand (nothing is), it conveys an overall message that we do have choices, and peace progress can be made if we make the right choices. Just having a place where we know the expected goal is peace also promotes the promise of compromise and friendship. I hope that eventually every classroom can have one. I can also envision the benefits of having one in the home to be used by family members. If enough of us work on peace in ourselves and promote peace with others, certainly there will be a peaceful difference made in our society. Thank you for promoting peaceful ideas."

Gloria Jenkins, School Counselor, John Johnson Elementary School, Bainbridge, Georgia

Dear Carol:

I wanted to follow up with you in regards to our usage of the wonderful Peace Rug! We have been using the rug to help children with disabilities and behavior issues. The rug has given many children a chance to learn and solve problems. This has been a wonderful resource and tool to help children with conflict issues. I have seen several children find peace when they use the rug and have observed so many intense moments become a time of love. There is a corner in our Family Resource Center for this time for children to use the Peace Rug. The rug has shown so many children a way to dissolve their anger, work on communication skills, way to control unwanted behaviors. I just wanted to share this information with you and how things have been going. The Peace Rug has given children a way to cope with the storms they face and has kept them safe until they can work out their own plan! This has been a special opportunity and I look forward to keeping in touch with you and if I can send any further information, please let me know. Thank you so much for all that you do!

Sincerely,

Elaine Tillman, Community Resource Specialist, Springfield Regional Center, Springfield, MO

My most memorable Peace Rug® event was when I had been offended by a student who refused to do something I asked. I "took" the student to The Peace Rug® in front of the rest of the class. I was able to model the language... The children responded positively."

Elaine Davis, Kindergarten Teacher, Brookwood School, Dalton, Georgia.

"Please accept our appreciation for the donation of The Peace Rug to our school. Each day we face conflict resolution incidents between students, and many times between students and adults.

Docket: T2739-906589

Additionally, our students many times face violence in the home and out in the community. We will use The Peace Rug as an integral part of our conflict resolution curriculum. I intend to train my staff on the use of (The Peace) Rug and pursue acquiring additional rugs for each classroom. Your contribution is our starting point in truly becoming a violence-free school."

Richard A. Stidom, Naomi Elementary School Counselor upon receiving The Peace Rug from North Georgia Electrical Membership Corporation

Last school year when I was counselor at Crossroads, an alternative school for children ages 12 to 18 in Whitfield County, Georgia; I was given The Peace Rug® to use with my students. I can tell you from my own personal experience that The Peace Rug® works! It really, really works!

When my students had a problem with another student, they went to The Peace Rug®. They themselves worked out whatever the difficulty was. I even posted the simple script in large letters so they could read it if they forgot the words. It really made a difference, and the atmosphere in my school changed from being reactive to being proactive for the rest of the school year.

I received The Peace Rug® late in the year, but ideally, starting the school year with this curriculum would be best for the students. I am now Assistant Principal in charge of Discipline at Dalton High School, and I want and need another Peace Rug® donated! I had been a professional counselor for many years before serving in any school setting and believe from my professional training that students of all ages need this experience of finding their own voice and need to develop this skill. It belongs in every classroom!

Ron Ward, MA, LPC, Assistant Principal, Dalton High School, Dalton, Georgia.

"I have found that The Peace Rug® has empowered many of my students to handle their own problems. They are less dependent on the teacher to address minor occurrences. Although preparing the students to effectively communicate their feelings takes a significant amount of time, it is well worth it. My instruction is interrupted significantly less with tattle telling since students can handle matters on their own. Problems that arise are handled primarily without the assistance of the teacher, which allows me to continue with other responsibilities. My students better understand that their actions affect others. They are learning that words can be used to solve problems and deal with emotion, rather than physical aggression. The Peace Rug® has been a very worthwhile tool in my first grade classroom."

Dr. Amy Haynes, Literacy Coach for Whitfield County Schools, Dalton, Georgia

“Students who were having problems with another child in the classroom would come and ask me if they could go to The Peace Rug®. At times when I did not know that something was happening between two students, they would go to The Peace Rug® and work out their problems. Sometimes I would not know what the situation was because they worked it out on their own without my having to intervene. They were learning to monitor their problems and work things out without an adult having to assist.”

Lynnda G. Higgins, IEP Teacher, Roan School, Dalton, Georgia

“My students have used The Peace Rug® for the past two years to handle conflicts with each other. They will ask to go The Peace Rug® without any prompting from me. This method of settling disagreements is so diplomatic because children are taking ownership for their problems and solving them in a non-hostile way. I applaud Helen for her remarkable behavior management invention!!!!”

Janice Griffin, First Grade Teacher, Park Creek School, Dalton, Georgia

“I started using The Peace Rug® as a single child thing, per the kids, you “think about it and make it better”.... I’ve since discovered it’s great for multiple kids. Several of my kids “thought” that if they wanted a particular toy, they could tell me “XXX is not sharing” and that I would automatically give the toy to them. Now I keep the toy and have them ALL go to The Peace Rug® and have THEM decide what to do... I believe it starts them in decision-making skills. They usually go to another toy or game.... fussing is down to almost zero now...”

Betsy Thornton, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, Roan School, Dalton, Georgia

“My students have shown a strong desire to work things out using The Peace Rug®. When students have a conflict they often initiate going to The Peace Rug®. They have worked hard to learn the positive dialogue to use at The Peace Rug®. The Peace Rug® has helped students to settle their own difficulties. It was well worth the time put into teaching the procedure.”

Kandace Carter, First Grade Teacher, Park Creek School, Dalton, Georgia

The thing that I think is special and quite effective about The Peace Rug® is that students CHOOSE to use it to solve problems. Often they will remember it before I do, and they will approach me and tell me that they are having problems with another student or that one has hurt

their feelings, and then they say, "I think we need to go to The Peace Rug®." I go on about my business of teaching while the 2 or 3 involved sit down and work out their issues. They usually come back from The Peace Rug® with smiles rather than tears."

Leigh Watson, Third Grade Teacher, Ringgold, Georgia

"...The Peace Rug® is an inventive tool that teaches the children there's another person involved, not just themselves, thus fostering listening and empathy skills, both critical skills for functioning in the world. The children are learning to set blame aside and say what's bothering them in a nonviolent way. Most of all, The Peace Rug® offers an option for solving conflict with others and the children are learning ways to approach conflict in a healthy way!..."

Michelle Lively, Second Grade Teacher, Brookwood Elementary, Dalton, Georgia

"My children often use it when we come in from recess to resolve some problem they had on the playground. (Some cooked up things just to get to sit on it!) By the time, they had sat and discussed their problem/s, they usually were laughing!"

Judy Griffin, Second Grade Teacher, Brookwood Elementary, Dalton, Georgia

"...there were 2 little girls who argued almost every day and ...I told them to go sit down on The Peace Rug® and talk about it. They did and then took it upon themselves to go again. From that point on, they never had any problems."

Cindy Parrott, Kindergarten Teacher, Roan School, Dalton, Georgia

"...I had two little girls that were mad at each other about something. They had been in trouble because of the way they were acting towards each other. I saw both of them approach me one day and I thought they were going to tell on each other again. Well, to my surprise, they looked at me and said, "Can we go to The Peace Rug® for a few minutes and see if we can work this out?" Well, of course, I said yes and they weren't mad at each other anymore..."

Jan Gowan, Second Grade Teacher, Park Creek Elementary School, Dalton, Georgia

Docket: T2739-906589

“I had used The Peace Rug® when the children have come in from the playground upset about a situation. They talk about what happened and what they should have done differently; they shake hands and come out smiling. This is a great tool. I have children tell me that they need to go to The Peace Rug® with someone and they solve their problems on their own without even involving me. It’s great and saves time!”

Traci Hanks, Kindergarten Teacher, Westwood Elementary School, Dalton, Georgia.

Testimonials from students on The Peace Rug®

During research for a doctoral dissertation, 60 students were interviewed under strict guidelines.

These are a few of the narratives on their reported experiences using The Peace Rug®.

The rest may be found in the complete dissertation.

From Dissertation by Dr. Helen B. McIntosh

Published with Permission

Student #5 "The Peace Rug is when you sit down and you talk to somebody and you share your feelings and you make up with each other. I felt shy at first and nervous. It has changed me to be a nicer person. It changed the other person: they are being nice to me. Now it's better. I also use the Peace Rug outside at recess."

Student #9 "When you use The Peace Rug you say nice stuff to your friend that was bothering you and you work it out and then you be [sic] friends again. Felt good using it. It changed me to be happy. It changed the other person to be happy too. In the night my mom was getting mad and I tell her to don't hit me [sic] and if we can talk. It changed the problem."

Student #12 "When I used it, it felt good. And I helped the other person do the right thing. It changed the other person by talking it out with them. Talking about it changed the problem. There was a girl in class who said she wished that I was never [sic] born. I told her that we needed to go to The Peace Rug....when you do this it makes me feel like this."

Student #13 "It was a good thing; it helped me. I felt happy. It changed me to not fight anymore and be friends. It changed [the others]...they stopped doing bad things. It changed the problem."

Student #14 "It was easy and it helped me to be friends with the others. I felt good when I was using it. It changed me by being friends with others and being peaceful and not fighting. I think it changed the other person by talking and giving kind words. It helped with the problem."

Student #16 "It's good to use when you meet new kids or if you have done something to them you can apologize to them. And it's a way to meet people and be friends with people. And if there is a group of kids that play together and don't play with you if you take them to The Peace Rug maybe they will ask you to come play with them. If I was the person who did something to them I would feel bad but I would still feel happy that I went to The Peace Rug to apologize to them and I felt like a good friend and it made me feel really good. I am very good but if I did something bad or got angry I would get on The Peace Rug and the kids would tell me what I did to them. I would start to feel how they felt and see how I would feel if they did it to me. So I see how I should treat people like I want to be treated. The other person, if they had done something to me, I am sure that if they saw how I felt they can see how it would hurt to be treated like that so that they will treat other people better. If me [sic] and the other person had problems like calling names or fighting we talked about it and noticed that we were hurting each other and that as we talked it worked out and the problem started to go away [sic]. I think The Peace Rug is a great thing and I think if it wasn't here there would be a whole lot of bad. There wouldn't be a way to make problems go away."

Student #27 “We talk to the person that we fight or have problems with. [I felt] fine. It changed me; it changed them. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug. Things are better.”

Student #50 “I used it last year and this year and when I was in kindergarten. [I felt] Good. It made my heart happy. It changed both [of us] and we hugged each other. We got to be friends. At home, when me [sic] and my sister fight, I use it. Every time she hits me I use it. She doesn’t know how to do it so I am teaching her.”

Testimonials from Parents* on The Peace Rug®

**Names changed to protect privacy*

"I am enjoying the relationships with my children more. The boundaries are better set regarding responsibility. As a result, I am less controlling and allowing my children to be responsible for their own choices."

Connie, children ages 19, 23, 25

"They feel more accepted and can feel the real love I have for them."

Kelly, children ages 10, 21, 24

"It (The Peace Rug) solves problems without scarring the people involved and improves relationships. I am working on responding to negative situations without blaming and without trying to force control. It's a great feeling when I can handle a situation correctly."

Pam, children ages 16 and 20

"We can talk without arguing."

Fiona, two children in high school

"My children really love to use The Peace Rug! We don't go around "wounding" each other and not even realizing we are doing it."

Bonnie, children in upper elementary, middle and high school

"I've got a really hot temper. The Peace Rug has let me say what really irritates me without my blowing up at my kids. It took a couple of weeks for me to realize it was working. It's more than a time-out – we really solve our problems."

John, children ages 10 and 7

Docket: T2739-906589

“Who would think that a rug and some words could make a difference? Trying to get 3 kids off to school started with arguing and continued when they got home. Now if something happens and we start to fight, one of the kids will just say, “Mom, it’s Peace Rug time,” and even the tone of my voice changes. Mornings aren’t bad anymore.”

Angela, kids 6, 7, and 14

“Why didn’t I have The Peace Rug when my boys were younger? Would have saved so many hurt feelings and anger – not only between them but for my wife and I. At least now we can talk respectfully to each other!”

Tom, boys 15 and 17

“My dad was a really angry and critical man and I’ve done the same to my boys. My wife heard about The Peace Rug and got one. I wasn’t going to use it but one day, I really exploded and almost hit one of them. Something had to change. We all learned what The Peace Rug was about and how to use it. Now, if any of us get made, we can work it out. I don’t want my boys to be like my old man and I think The Peace Rug is giving my family a new chance. I’m 40, but I’m proud to say I’m using The Peace Rug.”

Dan, 2 sons – 9 and 11



GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
Affiliated with NAESP

Docket: T2739-
906589

④
6

April 30, 2002

Ms. Helen McIntosh
Roan Elementary School
1116 Roan Street
Dalton, Georgia 30721

Dear Ms. McIntosh:

Thank you for your award application for the GAESP School Bell Award. Congratulations, your program application has been chosen by the School Bell Award Selection Committee, as a 2002 School Bell Award winner.

Your school will be recognized during the GAESP business meeting at Summer GAEL. You will need to prepare for publication a summary (not to exceed 500 words) and provide an accompanying photo of your school's program to the Executive Director at this meeting. We will use the summary and photo in next year's fall *Communicator*.

Awards will be presented and winning School Bell Programs will be showcased at the Fall Principals Conference on November 3-5 at Pine Isle Resort, Lake Lanier. The members of GAESP appreciate the contribution you make to our association and look forward to working with you in the future. Remember you will be introduced during the GAESP business meeting at Summer GAEL and presented with your School Bell Award at our Fall Principals Conference in November at Pine Isle, Lake Lanier that night. On this evening additional banquet tickets will be available for purchase for any guests, who may wish to join you at this celebration.

Together, we can make it happen for the children of Georgia, as they learn today to lead tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Phyllis Chastain'.

Phyllis Chastain, Executive Director

Cc: Frankie Beard

Georgia Association of Elementary Schools Principals' School Bell Award for 2002

THE PEACE RUG AT ROAN SCHOOL

What would you think of something simple that has the potential of stopping all school disrespect, teasing, bullying and violence? You would probably be like most teachers at Roan School -incredulous that something could address the many societal problems that face teachers and administrators every single day.

We have such a program at Roan School - it is called The Peace Rug® and it is a proven success to resolve conflicts and even more!

First, picture our school: 650 students in pre-kindergarten through third grade; 89% qualify for free or reduced meals; 84% are Hispanic; many come from single parent families; some have parents in jail. Parents are primarily employed in carpet mills and poultry plants - most on swing shifts so involvement with their children's education is difficult.

With many diverse backgrounds, having our children get along with one another is critical. We also want to teach them valuable life lessons such as how to resolve conflicts peacefully, communicate effectively, handle bullying and

prevent violence, overcome cultural diversity issues, and develop character. Most of these are lessons they will not get at home.

Many students see hitting and hurting in their own neighborhoods. They see violent themes portrayed in movies, on videos, with electronic games, with daily news programs, and on cartoons. Studies show that children have a high tendency to repeat the same patterns when seen repetitively, so our counselor was greatly concerned not only for our students but for students everywhere.

Something taught daily and systematically was needed to become a stronger pattern than what students were experiencing outside of school. Moreover, if Roan School was serious about zero tolerance to violence, every incidence of disrespect and other forms of non-physical violence had to be addressed as well.

Research of school shootings after Columbine showed that the perpetrators were actually long time victims of bullying. Their violent acts were committed after years of being unable to express their own feelings from being victimized. Many of our young children were victims of violence and yet,

like school shooters, had no voice - no way to unstuff their feelings.

Having a major intervention to counteract the negative violent behavior with positive behavior was one of our counselor's foremost goals. A second goal was to establish a physical "connecting" place that would be considered special and safe where a victim could talk with the bully. The third goal was for the students to know the words to help them "find their voice" if they became victims.

In September 1999, our counselor was divinely inspired to create The Peace Rug®. This special rug both provided a "place" to go and a process to use - that is, a dialogue that teaches children how to resolve even the smallest hurt or conflict immediately. The staff agreed to let her test this new idea. Within two weeks, there were no more unresolved conflicts in the entire school!

How does it work? Our counselor teaches The Peace Rug Process. It takes about 10-15 minutes to go over the dialogue and another 10-15 minutes to role-play various student situations.

When conflicts arise, children know what to do. They invite the person who has offended them to The Peace Rug and within

two to three minutes, the problem is solved and they are back in their seats! Initially, children may ask the teacher's permission but after a few days, they simply go to The Peace Rug on their own to handle their problems, freeing the teacher to continue teaching.

To date, no bully has refused to go to The Peace Rug because it is initially explained that The Peace Rug is not a place of punishment, shame or blame but a place to be better friends. Children do not abuse the privilege of having The Peace Rug in each classroom. They know it is a special place - only to be used when there is a problem they wish to work out.

The Peace Rug is a simple and unique classroom management curriculum that completely meets the State of Georgia QCC's and National Standards and benchmarks for conflict resolution, anger management, communication skills, interpersonal skills, bully-victim violence prevention, character education, and cultural diversity issues.

Our staff was skeptical that something so simple could be so powerful. However, The Peace Rug effectively addresses problems early before they are allowed to get out of control. We even have one on the playground for the

Docket: T2739-906589

students so we have peace everywhere at our school - with
The Peace Rug!



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Sizes

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TODD SCHOENEMAN/The Daily Citizen

Roan School students, from left, Dhalla Medina, Ricardo Chavez and Robespier Aguirre discuss issues on The Peace Rug in Elaine Jump's McIntosh to help kids settle disputes between themselves.

Resolving conflicts on a rug

BY JAMIE JONES
The Daily Citizen

Helen McIntosh searched far and wide for a solution to resolving conflicts and developing relationships among her 750 students at Roan School.

McIntosh, a school counselor, wanted to take the burden of solving student's disciplinary problems off teachers — allowing them time to actually teach — and show students how to get along.

"My goal was to find something very simple, very concrete that even small children could do, something my limited English speakers could do — so it couldn't be real wordy — and something that could be done every day," McIntosh said.

After months of creative thinking in which she snapped countless rolls of film of cloud formations, McIntosh nurtured an idea that she believes can help a victim of bullying or violence "find his or her voice."

So was born The Peace Rug, a three-by-five foot rug that comes with a set of instructions to resolve conflict at school, home or a business.

"I feel this is a contribution to children to at least get them to start talking about their issues," McIntosh said. "They are small in body but have huge issues. So this is a place where thoughts can be exchanged and problem solving takes place."

The success of her rugs at Roan and other area schools inspired her to start The Peace Rug Co., where she sells the cloud print creations on the

Internet through www.peacerug.com.

It also landed her company a deal with Shaw Industries to manufacture and distribute the rugs through its partnership with supermodel Kathy Ireland's "Young Attitudes" rug line aimed at young children.

Kathy Ireland Worldwide partnered with Shaw Industries to create a collection of area rugs and later a series of broadloom carpets called Kathy Ireland Shades of America.

A ceramic and porcelain tile collection under the Shades of America name was also added.

The Peace Rug even has its own full page spread in Shaw's spring rug catalog.

"It's moving from the schools to the home," said McIntosh, adding several hundred rugs have already been sold. "The project started as this little thing to help the students here but has grown to so much more."

The Peace Rug story started in January 1999 after a rash of school shootings broke out. McIntosh then began thinking about the profiles of the shooters. Why would they commit such terrible acts?

She noticed a trend of violence children are inundated with, including movies, television, news, video games and cartoons. Add those forms of violence to street and domestic violence, children face many difficulties, she said.

"I had such a burden for the children I was serving, and all children," McIntosh said. "There's so much violence in the world."

She came back to a counseling

principle: when a child sees violence, unless there is some kind of intervention or repatterning, that child will end up committing violence.

"I had to come up with as good a concept/resolution model as I could to be the intervention," McIntosh said. "I was teaching them good things, but it wasn't sticking."

Then in April of 1999 the Columbine school shootings happened, which would become the worst school shooting in United States history.

McIntosh, who is a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology at the University of Sarasota, found commonalities among the school shooters.

They had been victims of bullies and committed "ultimate act of bullying, ultimate act of violence." They had been teased, taunted, lacked the skill to say stop and were disconnected from friends and family.

That made McIntosh really think about her 750 kids at Roan School.

"I thought, 'If I don't teach them a better way, I've got 750 future perpetrators,'" McIntosh said.

She also said the non-physical violence in school — the eye-rolling, teasing, name calling — had a profound effect on physical violence.

"If we want to say as a school system or a community that we want to have a zero tolerance to violence, then we are going to have to put an end to this lower end that we overlook," McIntosh said.

In September of 1999, the Peace Rug idea came to her in the middle of

the night, an event she calls "divinely inspired."

The staff at Roan School quickly accepted the idea, and McIntosh taught the kids the concept over a two-week span. "The teachers don't have to settle every squabble during the day, they can actually teach," McIntosh said.

Though the teachers could facilitate The Peace Rug students were quickly doing it themselves.

"When in real life do we have a third person?" she asked. "Even when you're depending on another person the implied message is you can't do this yourself."

So after two students discuss their problem on the The Peace rug, "They come to a decision and then they high five or hug or whatever they choose to do as a closure," McIntosh said.

In the summer of 2000, Carol Lumpkin, a friend and certified financial planner and president of The Peace Rug Co. with 25 years of marketing experience, helped McIntosh get the project rolling.

A Shaw marketing representative sent a Peace Rug to Ireland. She later came to Roan School in late January as part of a Big Brothers Big Sisters event and the rug was added to Shaw's Ireland line.

"It's meant for parents and teachers who want their children to learn how to lovingly confront and to do it in a respectful way," said McIntosh, who doubles as the Peace Rug Co. CEO. "When the slightest little uh-oh happens, you can take care of it right away."

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What Adults Can Do



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How you can help

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Children who are bullied
Children who bully
Resource Kit

Communications Kit

Campaign News
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Back to Youth Site

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A number of key bullying-related resources were developed specifically for the *Take a Stand. Stop Bullying Now!* Campaign, but in addition to these a wealth of other valuable material exist. To give you access to as many bullying prevention materials as possible, we have a comprehensive inventory of resources - submitted to us by educators, publishers, and people from across the country. We hope you will find these items helpful as you attempt to address bullying in your home, in your school, or in your community.

Note that inclusion on this list does not constitute any sort of endorsement of a program's effectiveness by the *Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now!* Campaign, by the Department of Health and Human Services, or any other parties involved in the Campaign.

Individual links and resources have been catalogued according to resource type so that you can easily locate the information that is of the most interest to you. Click on a link below to view a list of resources. If you have developed, or are aware of, a resource on bullying that is not already listed, please visit our [Resource Submission Site](#) to provide us with more information about it.

For tips and suggestions on how to select books, audio-visuals and other materials from this list, [click here](#). For information about selecting an effective and appropriate program from the list, [click here](#).

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What Adults Can Do



Additional Resources

How you can help

All about bullying
Children who are bullied
Children who bully
Resource Kit

Communications Kit

Campaign News
Radio & TV PSAs
Print PSAs
Collateral Materials

Partnerships

Current Partners
Acknowledgements
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Back to Youth Site

Other Resources

[View All](#)

View by Target Audience:

- [Middle elementary \(grades 4-5; ages 9-10\)](#)
- [Middle/junior high \(grades 6-9; ages 11-13\)](#)
- [Parents](#)
- [School administrators & staff](#)
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[Back to Additional Resources](#)

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What Adults Can Do



Additional Resources

How you can help

All about bullying
Children who are bullied
Children who bully
Resource Kit

Communications Kit

Campaign News
Radio & TV PSAs
Print PSAs
Collateral Materials

Partnerships

Current Partners
Acknowledgements
Become a Partner

Back to Youth Site

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Other Resources for Middle/Junior High School - Grades 6-9 (ages 11-13)

[About Bullying](#) - by Channing Bete Company, Published by Channing Bete Company, 1991.

[Bully Busters®](#) - by Andrea Chorney, M.S., Franklin Rubenstein, Ph.D., Published by Frai Systems Inc., 2001.

[Facts for Teens: Bullying](#) - by National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center, 2002.

[Teens and Violence Series: Bullying--Enough is Enough!](#) - by Channing Bete Company, Published by Channing Bete Company, 2002.

[The Amazing Spider-Man on Bullying Prevention](#) - by Prevent Child Abuse America, Marvel Inc., SuEllen Fried, Published by Prevent Child Abuse America & Marvel Comics, 2003.

[The Peace Rug®](#) - by Dr. Helen B. McIntosh, 1999.

[Wary Mary or Saavy Sue: Which Are You? A Primer on Relational Aggression for Girls](#) - by Cheryl Dellasega, Published by Cheryl Dellasega, 2003.

[What to do When Words Become a Weapon](#) - by Cheryl Dellasega, 2003.

[Who Knew? The Bully-Free Issue](#) - by Channing Bete Company, Published by Channing Bete Company, 2001.

[Back to Other Resources](#)



What Adults Can Do



Additional Resources

How you can help

All about bullying
Children who are bullied
Children who bully
Resource Kit

Communicators Kit

Campaign News
Radio & TV PSAs
Print PSAs
Collateral Materials

Partnerships

Current Partners
Acknowledgements
Become a Partner

Back to Youth Site

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The Peace Rug®

by Dr. Helen B. McIntosh

Resource Type: Combination

Published in 1999

Kids stop other kids from bullying them in a few minutes when using The Peace Rug. The consists of an instructional brochure and audiotape plus a specially designed 3' x 5' rug. 1 and Spanish. Everyone in a classroom is taught the same language to use when any con feelings, name-calling, teasing, bullying, even gossiping and disrespect. Role-playing is d child having a chance to participate. After that, teacher is encouraged to let children go to to work out their differences in a safe and respectful way. No one is ever "sent" to The Pe invitation only. Everyone is equal and has equal time to express themselves using a predi dialogue. Because conflicts are handled in the early stages, anger isn't stuffed and allowe uncontrollable rage. Bullies who are disconnected from their peers don't hesitate to go to because it's not a place of shame, blame, criticism or judgement but a place to go to be re become friends and to make things okay. Atmosphere and attitudes in schools change dr children's negative behaviors are replaced with caring and concern for their classmates. 1 education qualities as well.

Pages: 5

Costs \$99.99 plus \$10.00 shipping & handling; discount for orders of 25 or more.

Also available in: Instructional tape in Spanish

Awards: Georgia School Bell Award

Website: www.peacerug.com

[Back](#)



THE PEACE RUG®:
ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND VALUE AS A
CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOOL

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Faculty of Argosy University at Sarasota
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

by

Helen B. McIntosh

Argosy University at Sarasota

Sarasota, Florida

May 2003

Dissertation Committee Approval:

Dr. Jim Reynolds, Chair	date
Dr. Mike Dubi	date
Dr. Marilyn Highland	date

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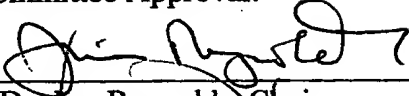
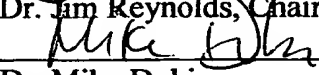
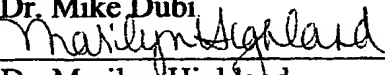
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May 2003

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOOL

by

Helen B. McIntosh

2003

Chairperson: Dr. Jim Reynolds
Committee: Dr. Michael Dubi
Dr. Marilyn Highland

Department: Counseling Psychology
Behavioral Sciences

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness, value, and other effects of a new conflict resolution curriculum called The Peace Rug in addressing the national problem of school violence. This curriculum is designed for a victim of either non-physical or physical bullying to ask their bully to come to The Peace Rug in the classroom. There the student or adult participants engage in a special dialogue leading to agreements, reconciliation, and better communication. The literature suggested some factors that contribute to school violence as that of children feeling disconnected from family and friends, and also not being able to find one's voice when bullied by others. The Peace Rug was designed to better connect students and teachers, as well as to

provide both a place and scripted words to use in order to find one's voice when intimidated in any way. The phenomenon under study has not been studied previously.

The heterogeneous sample for this qualitative study consisted of 60 students and 26 teachers from an elementary school in Northwest Georgia. This was a convenience or purposive sampling in order to primarily secure taped interviews of both students and teachers to better determine their experience with The Peace Rug with as much depth and detail as possible.

An initial lesson about how to use The Peace Rug was taught in each of thirty-two classrooms in the fall of 2002. Then in January of 2003, informed consent letters about this study were given to the students and teachers at the school. The researcher conducted the student and teacher semi-structured interviews as time permitted in February and March of 2003. The results will help to answer the research questions.

The summary of findings from many sources would indicate that The Peace Rug was very effective and had great value as a conflict resolution tool. This curriculum produced the desired efficacy and was considered important and useful to this sample. Narratives by students are in Appendices M, and narratives by teachers are in Appendices O. Concerning the extent the 60 students used The Peace Rug, 88% (n=53) of the sample said that they used The Peace Rug. More specifically, 37% used it for several or more years, 8% used it a lot, 38% used it in their classroom, 5% used it this year, 6% have seen it used, and 5% have not used it to date. Moreover, all 26 teachers expressed there was student use of The Peace Rug in their classrooms. Other percentages were: 81% expressed it was used a lot or frequently, 12% expressed use at home, and 8% expressed use for multiple years. Findings concerning experiences and common themes discovered

by students include: 83% experienced changes in self, others, or the problem; 53% experienced a change of mood; 43% expressed they were friends again, 33% expressed feelings used at The Peace Rug; 33% indicated knowledge of the process in their narrative; 22% asked their bully to stop; 18% used the words “It worked” or “Things are better;” 17% said they used it at home; 10% felt shy or scared at first; and 8% discussed less fighting now. The summary of the findings concerning the teachers’ description of their own experiences and the experiences of their students is: 100% made reference to the problem(s) or conflict(s) resolved; 100% made reference to students solving the problem instead of the teacher; 100% made reference to The Peace Rug as being a positive experience; 100% made reference to The Peace Rug as teaching a life skill (conflict resolution, communication, friendship, responsibility, respect, empathy, compassion, and self-control); 73% said students knew how to use The Peace Rug; 50% made reference to use of The Peace Rug in homes; and 23% referenced the reduction of incidences of conflict. Many other themes were discovered and are contained in Chapters Four and Five.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There was a special insight along this journey. As the researcher came to Chapter Three, she realized in a deeper way – almost like a surprise – how very personal this study was for her. She had known for years and shared very openly about the pain of not finding her own voice with her mother over many years of her life. Moreover, the researcher knew that this very personal issue had led to her to be more sensitive to this issue for the children in her school who were victims of bullying behaviors. It was this burden that led her to pray in January of 1999 for an intervention to train and equip children to find their voice(s) – because it took the researcher so long to find her own. What the researcher didn't put together until halfway through this study was that the first prayer for such an intervention took place only about three weeks after her mother died in December of 1998. She had not been aware of the timeline until now. The lights turned on, the blur was gone, and the dots were connected. So, I wish to thank my mother from a completely forgiven heart for the gift that has come from her pain and mine, and for the peace that others have found as a result.

An even higher acknowledgment is that of thanking God for answered prayer, for birthing The Peace Rug, and for taking it where it is supposed to go. Thank You, Lord, for walking with me through this dissertation process so faithfully as well.

I wish to acknowledge and thank my precious husband Jim who generously gave me this time when I could have been with him; and gave me his sweet love, support, and deep encouragement. I could not have done this without him. He is more than my life partner. I humbly thank my dear children Bryan, Blythe, and Lynn - and grandchildren Sarah and Ann for giving me the sacrifice of this time when I could have been there, and wanted to be there. Thank you, Dad, for your huge encouragement from the first day of my first course when you went with me to Sarasota and played “your” course (golf!) to the last day of my defense. Sincerest thanks also go to my brother and his family who cared for Dad at times I could have been there. Thanks also go to my mother-in-law Mart for praying and wishing me through this journey.

Dear friends who forged a path before me and gave me vision, tools, deep encouragement, and guidance were Dr. Connie Holliman and Dr. Christine Goldberg. In the same way, my dear friend Carol Lumpkin walked beside me on this path and gave so much during these three years to free me up to do this. She also pondered with me, edited with me, and dreamed with me! Deepest thanks also go to Dr. Amy Haynes for giving me words, fewer words (editing) and even more! Thanks go too to Dr. Lisa Goode for great resources. Many others prayed for me to be able to do this, and I wish to acknowledge their contribution: Susan and Jim McCormick, JoAnn Looper, Don Shoemaker, Walter and Jeanne Carter, Bill and Judy Adams, the Thursday girls, my Care Group, and more.

I wish to thank my principal, Dr. Frankie Beard, for permission to do this project at her school and for her support of The Peace Rug from the day of inspiration until now. For “being there” I wish to thank my intern Ernie Dempsey and “tech-ies” Scot Durham, Patsy Carter and Charlie Tripp for their special encouragement.

I wish to express my sincerest thanks to my Committee for their challenges to lead me upward, for their patience in this lengthy process, for their wisdom, and for their insights: Dr. Jim Reynolds, Chair; Dr. Michael Dubi; and Dr. Marilyn Highland.

Last but not least, I give thanks to the children and teachers of Roan School – from the fall of 1999 to the spring of 2003.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iii
Copyright Page.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
List of Tables.....	xii

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

The Problem.....	1
Problem Background.....	3
Literature Review.....	8
Purpose of the Study.....	13
Research Questions.....	14
Limitations/Delimitations.....	16
Definitions.....	18
Importance of the Study.....	21

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Statistics.....	24
Signs of Violence.....	27
Possible Explanations.....	32
Factors Needed For Possible Solutions.....	38
Review of Several Conflict Resolution Programs.....	44

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design.....	51
Selection of Subjects.....	52
Instrumentation.....	53
Assumptions or Limitations.....	55
Procedures.....	56
Analysis.....	58

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Restatement of the Purpose.....	61
Research Question One.....	63
Research Question Two.....	73
Research Question Three.....	76
Research Question Four.....	91
Summary of Findings.....	91

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary.....	95
Conclusions.....	96
Implications for Practice.....	97
Implications for Research.....	99

Recommendations.....	99
List of References.....	103
Appendices	
Appendix A: Lesson Plans Taught To Students.....	109
Appendix B: Picture of Peace Rug.....	118
Appendix C: Audiocassette Transcript.....	120
Appendix D: Interview Questions.....	126
Appendix E: Letter to Parents (English).....	128
Appendix F: Letter to Parents (Spanish).....	130
Appendix G: Informed Consent to Parents (English).....	132
Appendix H: Informed Consent to Parents (Spanish).....	134
Appendix I: Letter to Teachers.....	136
Appendix J: Informed Consent for Teachers.....	138
Appendix K: Lesson Plan to Explain Informed Consent.....	140
Appendix L: Student Narratives on Frequency of Use	142
Appendix M: Student Narratives on Reported Experiences.....	146
Appendix N: Teacher Narratives on Frequency of Use.....	163
Appendix O: Teacher Narratives on Reported Experiences	166

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug that indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool?	75
2	To what extent do the teachers see frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students?	77
3	How do the teachers describe their own experiences and the experiences of their students concerning the Peace Rug including any possible changes that took place?	92

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

The Problem

Violence is a distinct national problem facing homes, schools, and neighborhoods. Legislators and school administrators are seeking preventive measures to curb school shootings and other forms of violence in schools today. Teachers desire management tools that will minimize classroom disruptions so that instructional time is protected. At present, many teachers are leaving the teaching profession because of the challenges related to classroom discipline. Many educators feel defeated when confronting the aggressive behaviors of students and feel ineffective when teaching a demanding curriculum within this behavioral context (Schlozman, 2002).

Parents worry about their children's physical and emotional safety at school since children often experience teasing, taunting, or even physical violence. Karen Maudlin (2002, p. 6) in *Sticks and Stones* said, "Parents of school-aged children are frantic to find ways to equip their children and protect them from harm at school." Ron Banks in *Bullying in Schools* (1997, p.1) expressed the same sentiment: "Bullying in schools is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the right of students to learn in a safe environment without fear." The American Medical Association's Council on Scientific Affairs (2002, p.1) suggests that "Without intervention, bullying can lead to serious academic, social, emotional and legal problems...and that studies of successful anti-bullying programs are scarce in the United States..." Children are repeating the patterns of violence seen on television, movies,

video games, and even domestic violence demonstrated in their own homes and neighborhoods (Maudlin, 2002; Wessler, 2001). Glasser (1999) and Olweus (1993) asserted that children are more and more disconnected from their families and peers. This disconnect can be attributed to poor communication between children and their peers, which leads to poor conflict resolution skills (Glasser, 1999). Ron Banks (1997, p.1) echoed these thoughts: "Studies indicate bullies often come from homes where physical punishment is used, where the children are taught to strike back physically as a way to handle problems, and where parental involvement and warmth are frequently lacking."

The central problem is that today's students lack life skills such as the ability to communicate successfully with their peers and to resolve normal conflicts. Getting along skillfully allows students to achieve more academic success, according to Dr. Peter Jensen, Director of the Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health at Columbia University. Jensen suggested, as cited by the National Institute of Mental Health (2000, p.1) that "it is just as important for children to be able to form good relationships with their peers and teachers as it is to decode spelling words and master the use of a crayon or pencil." Children need to learn how to "find their voice" and use respectful language both to build relationships and to set limits when they are being bullied. This will reduce the likelihood that they will be further victimized and should prevent the conflict from escalating.

In *No More Victims* (Peretti, 2001, p. 28), the author examined anger escalation and the impact of video games make on this phenomenon: "a modern-day victim of abuse can gravitate to violent video games, in which he can vent his pain and anger by blasting his enemies into atoms." Children need to be trained and systematically re-patterned at

school to communicate respectfully and to resolve conflicts that will outweigh any ineffective patterns they may have developed through inappropriate familial, social, and environmental influences. A special “connecting place” is needed in each classroom where students can work out conflicts, whether large or small. Students must be explicitly taught the appropriate words and communication strategies that will help them to develop healthy social relationships. This study will examine the relationships between violence, conflict resolution, and bullying in the lives of school children. It will explore one possible tool, The Peace Rug, which attempts to provide a special place and vocabulary to assist students toward effective conflict resolution.

The Peace Rug is a 3' x 5' rug with a cloud design. The instructions on how to introduce and how to use The Peace Rug come in a brochure and on an audiocassette tape (Appendix B) for the facilitator to use in teaching the process to the students. To teach The Peace Rug process for school use, either the school counselor or teacher accomplishes this during a lesson or class meeting. This process is explained to each classroom in about 10 to 15 minutes, followed by another 10 to 15 minutes of role-playing for students to practice what to say. Appendix A provides detailed instructions in Lesson Plan form how this is accomplished. After all students are taught the procedures as well as the dialogue to use, usually students initiate this activity with only support from the teacher. The teacher can participate more actively in the process, but the process is designed for students to operate independently if possible. On a daily basis when a student is bullied, he or she will ask their bully to come to The Peace Rug, where both students will participate in the special dialogue. When an agreement has been reached after dialogue by the victim and the bully, the students will celebrate with a handshake,

high-five, or hug. This curriculum involves systematic training to re-pattern students for non-violent responses with one another, provides a special “connecting place” for students to talk, and teaches appropriate words as a life skill for resolving conflicts and better communication.

Problem Background

The National Standards for School Counseling Programs, as stated by the American School Counselor Association (2002), facilitate student development in three areas: academic development, career development, and personal/social development. For the purposes of this study, the investigator will concentrate on the latter. Standard A within the Personal/Social Development area reads, “Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others” (p. 2). Standard B asserts, “Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals” (p.2). Standard C follows by stating, “Students will understand safety and survival skills” (p.2). Every school system in the United States has its own statewide special curriculum mandates as well, but counselors are generally responsible for teaching bully-victim violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management, communication skills, character education, cultural diversity education, relationship building, and the development of critical thinking skills.

There are many resources which can be used to teach the above described standards and skills. However, the investigator experienced difficulty in finding an existing curriculum or program that met the unique needs of her specific student population. The available resources were too complex and required advanced language skills. This was in sharp contrast to the student population being sampled in this study.

The sample consists of young children, who were predominantly Latino. These highly verbal materials were deemed inappropriate for either the Anglo or Latino population because this student population was not only young, but also demonstrated poorly developed language skills. Most students were not able to comprehend and process the content of material which prevented them from learning the desired content. Many of the youngest students spoke little or no English upon entering school, and most of the English-speaking students began school with below average language, listening, and reasoning skills. To compound this problem, the resources available were not concrete in cognitive style, but were far too abstract. They also lacked visuals that enhance learning in the earlier grade levels.

Another problem with most available materials was that they were teacher-centered and rarely required students to actively construct knowledge. The responsibility for initiating resolution remained with the adult(s). Even the best cognitive skills taught through these methods did not seem to re-pattern the students' aggression or poor communication skills.

Lastly, when some popular resources such as The Second Step Program (Committee for Children, 1997) were taught, the effect was disappointing: the offended students were still offended; the victims and their bullies still had not resolved their conflicts with each other; and they still were not closer to lasting agreements or closer together in relationship. It appeared that the students were not acquiring the needed relational skills. They also lacked the ability to integrate newly learned skills into their daily lives. They were not systematically re-patterning or overriding their former ineffective patterns. The investigator sought something simple but powerful that would

enable all students to relate better with each other. It appeared that students needed to find their voices and be taught very simple language that could be easily understood and repeated by even pre-kindergarten students and by English language learners.

Additionally, it was believed that students could learn to take responsibility for their relationships and could learn the life-long skill of standing up to a bully in a strong but respectful way.

Peer mediation is not a new intervention on school campuses. For many years there have been programs training older children to serve as mediators and to resolve the conflicts between two or more younger students. There are several problems with this model. First, if there are mediators, the students in conflict have a less direct opportunity to learn and use the skill themselves to find their own voice. They often slip into a pattern of asking someone else to speak for them, and many decide to just repress or “stuff their feelings.” Perhaps students would be better served through finding their own voices. They can learn and develop the skill of communicating and resolving conflicts with each other. In essence they can learn the mediator dialogue and fulfill this role for themselves. Secondly, many of the students who are trained to serve as mediators for others are “set apart” and are considered “special.” This has the potential to lead to an “elite” system, which could make the students being mentored feel inferior. An innovative idea may be to develop a way for every student to serve as his or her own advocate and to learn and practice this life skill every day in the classroom and beyond.

If schools do espouse a zero tolerance policy against violence, then all acts of violence will need to be addressed. Two leaders in this field, Hazelden and the Johnson Institute (1999), suggested that there is a continuum of violence that begins with non-

physical acts such as “the look,” teasing, and taunting and continues to include physical hitting and hurting. School shootings compose the opposite end of the continuum.

Stephen L. Wessler, Director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Hate Violence, and Research Associate Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Maine, stated that “the escalation of degrading language and slurs to more focused harassment and threats and then to violence was the pattern in virtually every case of serious hate violence in middle schools, high schools, and colleges” (Wessler, 2001, p. 18) from 1992 until the year 2000 in Maine. Concerning escalation, Wessler (2001) stated that violence is “never the beginning of anything...but was the end of something, and that something was an escalating pattern of harassment that started with degrading language and slurs” (p.18). This can even happen quickly – “often in a matter of seconds – a mild argument in a hallway can escalate to involve violent and threatening language” (Wessler, 2001, p.18).

What happens when the victim of violence commits acts of violence – when the victim becomes the bully? More literature (Banks, 1997; Maudlin, 2002; Olweus, 1993; Peretti, 2000) suggested that the profile of school shooters is that they were previously teased and taunted by peers, disconnected from peers, and not able to voice their rage. Wessler (2001, p.19) repeated this theme: “Some students who endure slur after slur, day after day, week after week, reach the breaking point and snap, hitting back at the attacker.” Cycles of abuse are common, as illustrated by two stories from *Sticks and Stones* (Maudlin, 2002, p.33). First, Julia was a main target of bullying from kindergarten to fourth grade. In fifth grade she developed a friendship with a bully and became a bully herself. Ultimately, she began to repeat many of the same actions that had been done to

her. Secondly, Charles Andrew Williams of Santee, California was a victim of bullying such as “being picked on and punched” for years. “A child of divorce with little adult supervision, he had few outlets for dealing with what happened to him” (p.33). Then in March of 2001 he “killed two students and wounded thirteen others” (p.33). Maudlin (2001, p.33) asked the question, “Was he a bully or was he a victim?”

It would appear that the lower end of the violence continuum needs to be addressed in schools as much as the more physical violence. Teasing and other non-physical forms of violence offer serious implications as well. Would it be a profitable experience for every student to be able to voice his or her feelings about acts of disrespect in a respectful way? Even more radical is the possibility that a victim and a bully could discuss their problem(s), make some agreements, and even become friends. Such resolutions could occur in the school context of classrooms or playgrounds. Effective conflict resolution skills could extend into neighborhoods and into homes that will positively impact the lives of siblings and parents.

In *Sticks and Stones*, Maudlin (2002) told the story of a mother who noticed bruises on her seven-year old son’s arm when he was bathing one night. She asked him what happened and found herself minimizing his victimization:

He began to cry as he reluctantly admitted that a known bully waited for him on the playground each day and hit him if he didn’t let him cut in line for tetherball. The mom suggests the boy stop playing tetherball and avoid the bully, and reminds him that soon he’ll be older and won’t have to deal with this anymore. (p.5)

Maudlin advised against this mother’s seemingly wise counsel:

Imagine that the woman’s husband comes home from work and says that yet again his colleague punched him at the office. Would she suggest that her husband avoid the department where the bully works? Would she assure him that

someday he will be the boss and then not have to worry about the bully? No. No adult should have to tolerate being physically harmed at work. Why is the same scurrilous behavior relegated to a less important status if it occurs with children? If behavior is abusive when it occurs to adults, then it is also abusive if it occurs with children. Unintentionally we are conveying a double standard for our children. (p.5)

Some other very powerful and relevant questions were raised in *No More Victims*

(Peretti, 2001) as we examine the problem background for this study:

Why do parents, teachers, teacher's [sic] assistants, fellow students, friends at school and church, coworkers, extended family members, and others see it happening, hear it happening, and know it's happening but fail to take it seriously? If devaluing human life...is wrong, why do so many people do so little to stop it? Worse yet, why do so many participate in it? (p.29)

Abundant numbers of stories exist about victims of bullying and the verbal and physical wounds that result from each encounter. Many selected narratives and the most descriptive of recent statistics will be provided in this qualitative study.

Literature Review

This section will introduce and preview Chapter Two, where there will be a larger review of literature for this qualitative study addressing The Peace Rug. Since narratives from students and teachers are the heart of this qualitative study, the investigator thought that some quotes from a very relevant non-fiction text would be appropriate in setting the tone and stage for what is to follow. This present study is about the damage done when a bully victimizes any child, whether accomplished by "seemingly minor" disrespecting or actual physical aggression toward the victim. Popular author Frank Peretti's own poignant and graphic story, *The Wounded Spirit* (Peretti, 2000) told of the suffering he experienced as a young boy in school. Tom Neven, in a cover story article for *Focus On The Family* magazine, wrote that Frank Peretti is "one of the many walking wounded

who suffered at the hands of classmates and sometimes teachers” (Neven, 2001). In referencing Peretti’s story, Neven said:

His is a wounded spirit, and he believes a large number of adults carry some kind of psychological hurt from their childhood years. And the cycle continues. A recent study published by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that nearly a third of children in sixth through 10th grades had either bullied or been bullied. (p.2)

Neven (2001) continued with a description of Peretti’s physical problems, which led to his being so victimized.

Shortly after birth Peretti was diagnosed with cystic hygroma, a growth on the side of his neck that grew so large it threatened to strangle him. Barely two months old, he was rushed to the hospital, where doctors tried to remove as much of the mass as possible. After 10 days in the hospital, he went home “a tiny bag of bones with a long scar and black sutures that made it appear as if my head had been nearly severed and then sewn back on”.... Peretti underwent many surgeries in the following years, and because of his physical struggles his body did not mature as quickly as other children’s. Aside from the scar on his neck, the most obvious symptom of his malady was his tongue: swollen to the point it stuck out of his mouth, black, scabby, and oozing. If Peretti ever wanted to forget about it, his classmates were sure not to let him. Not only was his tongue grotesque, but it left him with a speech impediment. (pp. 2-3)

In junior high school, especially in physical education classes, Peretti experienced a virtual prison. Neven (2001) continued: “Going into the locker room meant sure torment from the stronger boys... Being slammed up against lockers. Snapped with wet towels. Name-calling. And a coach who seemed not to notice or care... He felt trapped” (p.3). Peretti placed blame on the school system, according to Neven (2001):

No one, not one adult anywhere said, “You know what, Frank? What’s happening to you is wrong. You shouldn’t be putting up with that.” But one teacher finally made a difference. It was something as simple as noticing a downcast young boy and taking the time to ask a simple question: How are you doing? (p.4)

Neven (2001) also revealed some of Peretti's own thoughts about the root problems in the Columbine school shooting as well as more information about the shooters as victims of bullying and the pain of being a victim himself:

The kids were slammed against lockers; they were squirted and pelted with food in the lunchroom. They were being run off the road by the jocks in their cars. There were kids actually getting to class by going outside the school building and circling around and coming in the other way so they wouldn't be picked on in the hallways, and all this was going on in a school environment, and nothing was done about it. If you've got the disposition to let anger fester, and that's what happened with Klebold and Harris, something is going to happen. They had so much anger. These guys were pretty warped in the first place, but if I had that kind of disposition, and I was back in seventh grade, and I had Mr. _____ for a teacher, and I had a gun, who knows? Where does it start? At some point in a child's life he becomes the inferior one, the different one, the ugly one, the fat one. For whatever reason that shapes the way he interacts. He becomes retiring, quiet – either that, or overly compensating and defensive. It's like painting a sign around your neck: Beat up on me because you'll get away with it. You begin to expect to be treated that way, and the other kids pick up on that like an animal smelling prey. (p.6)

Peretti (as cited in Neven, 2001) discussed the differences in the ways girls and boys bully others: "It's easy to be mean. Girls can be bullies just as much as boys. Boys are more into the physical stuff. The girls are more into the social. They'll ostracize, insult, leave out, ignore, put down..." (p.4).

In his own book, Peretti (2000) wrote more about Columbine and how his personal experiences led him to understand why victims of bullying often retaliate and hurt their bullies:

Moreover, I am haunted by the tragedy of Littleton, Colorado, on April 20, 1999. We've heard the many theories and pontifications on why two students, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, strode into Columbine High School and massacred their schoolmates and a teacher. I'm sure the theories about violence on television and movies, violent video and computer games, the availability of guns, and the unavailability of parents

all have their legitimate place in the discussion. I don't pretend to know with certainty what was happening in the hearts and minds of those young killers, and yet...I remember the thoughts I had, sitting alone in the school library after D.H. picked me up by my neck or sitting alone on the street curb, eyes watering, after P.B. sprayed deodorant in my face. I remember what I wished I could do if only I had the strength, the skill in the martial arts, or the advantage that a baseball bat might give me over the bullies who bludgeoned and batted me around verbally and physically. (pp. 67-68)

Peretti (2000) offered more insight about how the Columbine incident demonstrates a victim's need for power. He said that it was only "natural [for Eric and Dylan] to choose a place to show their power [on Hitler's 110th birthday] [such as a school], where everyone, from the parents and teachers on down, had all the power, and they didn't" (p.71). Even the boys' choice of the cafeteria as the shooting site was significant because that is where so much of their victimization occurred. Peretti believed that "what happened at Columbine was the result of a wounded spirit" (p.72):

It is no secret that kids on the fringes of the cool crowd of Columbine endured their share of taunts and abuse. They were called faggots, were bashed into lockers, and had rocks thrown at them. They were shoved, pelted with pop cans or cups of sticky soda, splattered with mashed potatoes and ketchup, even sideswiped by cars while they rode their bikes to or from school. One anonymous teen spoke of waking on school days with a knot in his stomach and the dread of having to face more humiliation at school. I'm not saying what they [Eric and Dylan] did was OK, but I know what it's like to be cornered, pushed day after day. Tell people that we were harassed and that sometimes it was impossible to take. Tell people that...eventually, someone was going to snap. (pp.72-73)

A principle to which this research study will often return was also included in this book:

Why is it so important that we address the problem of bullying and other demeaning attitudes and behaviors in our society? Because one in four

bullies will end up in the criminal correction system. Because those who have been wounded often become those who wound others. (p.73)

He made a strong appeal to caring adults and children to put an end to this victimization. Peretti (2000) also helped to bring understanding to this issue as he continues:

Then why do we allow it? Why do parents, teachers, teacher's assistants, fellow students, friends at school and church, coworkers, extended family members, and others see it happening, hear it happening, and know it's happening but fail to take it seriously? Surely the teachers and staff at Columbine – or any school for that matter - could hear the sounds of bodies hitting lockers, can see the ketchup stains all over some students' clothing, can hear the laughter of the bullies and the cries of the victims. Surely the bus drivers know when a gang of losers descends on one helpless kid, knocking his books all over the street at the bus stop. Surely the teachers notice when a child comes into class with his shirt torn, his shoes missing, and his clothing soiled. Most certainly, the kids know what's happening; they're part of it. They face the bullying, badgering, and other such treatment almost every day in school; they're immersed in it. Why don't they put a stop to it, to refrain from such behaviors themselves, and to confront it in their friends? What about the parents of children who are being bullied? Do they have no options? Do they have no voice? Must they sit by in silence when they know their child is nearly vomiting from stress before leaving for school each morning? (pp.91-92)

Hoover and Oliver, (as cited in Peretti, 1996) stated in *The Bullying Prevention Handbook* (p.96) that:

In the end, bullying is related to our ultimate beliefs about the worth of individuals and the way they should be treated. The topics of morality, moral education, ethical reasoning, and spirituality lie at the core of society's problems, including child-on-child aggression. As practitioners think about bullying in the future, it would be beneficial to examine the role that moral development plays in learning to care about one another. (p.111)

In closing, Peretti challenged us to speak up and do something about it: "Become a Peacemaker" (Peretti, 2000, p.140). Further, he said that:

People are slowly waking up to the prolonged impact of the problem – that bullies in school often grow up to be bullies in the home, abusing their spouses and children and perpetuating the downward spiral. Bullies in the home leave the house and go to work, where they continue to abuse employees and coworkers. The cycle can only be stopped by a change of the heart...(p.188)

Purpose of the Study

In a videotext interview, Dr. William Glasser (1999) stated that two of many problems facing schools today are interrelated. First, students are disconnected from each other; and second, schools are experiencing school violence. This disconnection is demonstrated when students cannot communicate respectfully and cannot peacefully resolve normal conflict situations. Moreover, there is ongoing bullying on school campuses. There are countless victims of bullying who are potential school-shooters because they have not learned how to find their voice, connect with others, or establish some agreements with others through dialogue and negotiation. There is a tremendous need for a simple tool in each classroom that assists students in learning the needed communication skills. They must learn to communicate effectively with a peer, even when that peer is a bully. Students need a safe and special place in the classroom where they can dialogue with one or more classmates and quickly settle any conflicts, while instruction continues. The existing scholarly literature discussed in Chapter Two will show a documented need for increased understanding in the areas of victimology, communication, and conflict resolution.

The purpose of this phenomenological/multi-case study is to explore the effectiveness, value, and other effects of a newly designed process called The Peace Rug. This research will be conducted at an elementary school site in Northwest Georgia. At

this stage in the research, the program or process called The Peace Rug will be generally defined as a “communication and conflict resolution tool” to enhance connections and create peaceful solutions for conflicts. Many artifacts such as photographs, videos, memos, and statements will be used to provide narratives and other information for this study.

Research Questions

The Peace Rug process or curriculum began in the 1999-2000 school year in several schools and continues to be used in many more schools to date (2002-2003 school year). However, no official data has been gathered to investigate its effectiveness. The focus of this research study is as follows: Is The Peace Rug process effective; does it have value; and is it useful within the area of use for which it was intended? The researcher considered the frequency of use of The Peace Rug by participants and the quality of experience(s) concerning The Peace Rug process to reflect its effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool. The following research questions will be addressed:

Research question one: To what extent have the students used The Peace Rug?

Research question two: Have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug that indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool?

Research question three: To what extent do the teachers see frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students?

Research question four: How do the teachers describe their own experiences and the experiences of their students concerning The Peace Rug including any possible changes that took place?

The interview questions found in Appendix E are the mechanisms used in this study to address the four research questions. In order to carry out research on this little known phenomenon and innovative system, in-depth questions will be used in this study. Such questions will be asked in a natural setting using a descriptive and exploratory approach. The open-ended springboard questions will be asked during all student and teacher person-to-person interviews.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) asserted the following about phenomenological interviewing in qualitative studies:

Phenomenological interviewing is a specific type of in-depth interviewing grounded in the tradition of phenomenology. Phenomenology is the study of lived experiences and the ways we understand those experiences to develop a worldview. It rests on an assumption that there is a structure and essence to shared experiences that can be narrated. The purpose of this type of interviewing is to describe the meaning of a concept or phenomenon that several individuals share. (p.112)

These authors also cited Seidman (1998) concerning in-depth interviewing and said:

Three in-depth interviews compose phenomenological inquiry. The first focuses on past experience with the phenomenon of interest; the second focuses on present experience; and the third joins these two narratives to describe the individual's essential experience with the phenomenon. It focuses on the deep, lived meanings that events have for individuals, assuming that these meanings guide actions and interactions. (pp. 112-113)

An extremely important section of Marshall and Rossman's (1999) work concerned interviewing children, which is an approach that will be used in this research.

Children may be the primary focus of a study or one of many groups the researcher wants to interview. Their perspectives may be sought because they offer fresh insights. Increasingly, there are calls for including children's perspectives as relevant and insightful in learning more about aspects of their worlds. This is especially true in education where all too often those most affected by educational policy and programmatic decisions – the students - are absent from inquiry. (p.115)

Limitations/Delimitations

One of the primary limitations that exists is that of the researcher's relationship with the school under study. The staff and students know and are comfortable with this researcher. Will this affect their responses? Therefore, is The Peace Rug process effective because the students know the counselor and wish to please her, or because The Peace Rug process is inherently solid and able to change relationships? In addition, the researcher developed The Peace Rug curriculum that is under study in response to a need in 1999. Is there a bias since the researcher is also the creator? After careful self-evaluation, the researcher believes that there is some bias that this curriculum deserves to be studied; that it has met needs; that it has been effective; that it has demonstrated some value; and that it has been found useful. She has candidly and informally seen a measure of success with its use at her school and other schools as well; however, this success has never been formally researched and examined more fully. She is very open to such an exploration, safe-guarding any personal manipulation of outcome. Is there a bias since the researcher has a business relationship with the company? To this the researcher categorically says yes, but she has maintained very careful boundaries in this regard. Moreover, the careful steps and energy required to keep the business relationship separate has even been a burden to the researcher as well as to the company. Since the researcher

has had to step away from the business relationship, her business partner has had to assume full responsibility for the company.

Because of the immediate success of this curriculum, the company was formed after one year of The Peace Rug's use to be able to provide this curriculum in other schools nationally and internationally. The researcher assigned her rights to the trademark, copyright, service mark, and pending patent to The Peace Rug Co., Inc. In order to insure that this research is not skewed or biased for any personal gain, many steps have been taken to insure objectivity. In truth, it has been a burden and even more difficult for the researcher to do research because of a business relationship with The Peace Rug Co., Inc. For three years, students and teachers in many schools have given informal, unsolicited, and positive feedback as well as stories about The Peace Rug; but this information was never solicited, collected and analyzed in a scientific way. This study will provide this very important formal analysis.

One last limitation is that of generalizability. This present study could have been done in more schools, but was delimited by the researcher to only one elementary school in an urban school in Northwest Georgia. Next, because of the unique student demographics of this school (to be discussed in later chapters), the generalizability is limited only to similar populations. Additionally, there will be a lack of generalizing to a wider population, or external validity, because this study will not utilize an experimental design. It would be inappropriate to assume that this particular study would have the same results if duplicated using other populations. Another reason that an experimental study was not considered for this particular research study is due to low internal validity. It would be difficult to isolate the independent variables and dependent variables in this

school setting because of the researcher's relationship with the school. We could never say for certain that the independent variable (The Peace Rug curriculum) alone caused the dependent variable (the effects under investigation). It would also be difficult to detect other possible threats to internal validity because The Peace Rug curriculum has been utilized for over three years. This study could, however, be easily replicated by others as either an experimental study or as a qualitative study for settings with no prior usage of The Peace Rug curriculum. Because of the above considerations, the researcher chose a qualitative research design. This present descriptive, exploratory, qualitative study is intended to be a much more reliable, valid, and comprehensive way to evaluate this curriculum.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following operational definitions will be utilized:

Bullying: The deliberate, repeated harm or threat of harm by the same student or group of students against a relatively defenseless student or staff member. Bullying happens when someone with more power unfairly hurts someone with less power on multiple occasions. Power may consist of physical strength, social skill, verbal ability, or another resource (Johnson Institute, 1999).

Class meeting: A single meeting or series of meetings that a classroom teacher facilitates in order to help the classroom to function better. One of the goals of the first meeting would be to adopt and agree on the classroom's rules for the school year.

Conflict Resolution: A method or strategy that enables people to interact with one another in positive ways in order to resolve differences.

Connect(ed): To bind or fasten together; join or unite; link; to establish communication between; put in communication; to associate, attach, or place in relationship; to associate mentally or emotionally (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984). In the literature review, Glasser (1968, 1992, 1998, 1999), Beck and Malley (1998), and Richardson and Wubbolding (2001) will speak to the relevance of this concept of connectedness to the present study.

Disconnect(ed): To sever or interrupt the connection; detach; disjointed; broken; lack of connection (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Effectiveness: Capable, competent, that which is able to produce a (desired) effect; adequate to accomplish a purpose; producing the intended or expected result (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Enabling: Unwittingly protecting a person from the full negative consequences of his/her actions out of a sense of love, compassion, fear, or a survival instinct (Johnson Institute, 1999).

Family meeting(s): A single meeting or a series of meetings that a family may establish to help the family to function better. One of the goals would be to come to an agreement about its own rules and rituals.

Finding one's voice: An ability to speak up and set a limit, state a concern, make an appeal, or possibly even exhort someone; not feeling or being intimidated.

Pattern: A mode of behavior or combination of acts, qualities, regarded as characteristic of persons or things (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Relationship(s): A connection, association, or involvement; connection between persons by blood or marriage; an emotional or other connection between people (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Re-patterning: Changing an already existing mode of behavior or combination of acts or qualities that are regarded as characteristic of persons or things.

Respectful: Full of, characterized by, or showing politeness or deference (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Safe place: A place that feels emotionally and physically safe.

The Peace Rug®: The Peace Rug® is a 3' x 5' rug with a cloud design that is accompanied by instructions for its use. Helen B. McIntosh, School Counselor, developed the curriculum, program, and process in September of 1999 as a conflict resolution and communication tool.

Value: Attributed or relative worth, merit, or usefulness; to consider with respect to worth, excellence, usefulness, or importance; to regard or esteem highly (The Random House College Dictionary, 1984).

Violence: Any word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or possessions (Johnson Institute, 1999).

Violence Continuum or Continuum of Violence: A theoretical model that ranks the intensity of violence from non-physical violence or disrespect (low end) to physical violence (high end) (Johnson Institute, 1999).

Importance of Study

The current study will make a significant contribution to the body of literature and could offer implications for improving policy and practice concerning school violence.

Could the study of The Peace Rug have a significant impact on the current thinking and solutions sought about violence in our schools, homes, and communities? This study could contribute to existing theories by critiquing a new and innovative prevention model for all levels of violence. The current body of literature lacks information concerning proven, effective, and successful programs that address violence at the elementary school level. This study will specifically focus on elementary students and violence. Also it seems that there is little discussion in the literature about “violence” at the “lower end” of the violence continuum. These acts of violence would consist of the more natural, everyday actions of disrespect. This study will not only focus on these nonphysical acts of violence and their connection to future physical violence, but also on how they can be systematically addressed and changed. There appears to be little mention of prevention in the literature. There are model crisis plans for “after” a trauma and counseling for post-traumatic stress, but there is little emphasis on implementing concrete proactive methods.

In summary, this study could address one possible proactive model for the prevention of violence in schools. The Peace Rug could have the potential to positively impact existing practices in schools. It could have broader applications that extend into homes and communities. This study and its narrative data will reveal the real story. There is a nationwide cry to stem the tide of school shootings and the ever-increasing need to reduce discipline problems in today’s schools. There is an urgent need to facilitate conflict resolution and to build strong, healthy relationships. The focus of this qualitative study addressing The Peace Rug is to better determine its effectiveness and value in meeting the above stated needs.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The new rise in research literature and programs concerning school violence in America is evidence of a growing national problem. The topic of violence extends beyond professional journals, books, web sites, and scholarly magazines into the public media of newspapers, television, and family publications. The statistics and signs of violence are numerous and staggering. There appears to be a common thread connecting many violent acts: children need strong connections in their relationships at home and at school. A second connection is the tendency of “victims” of bullying, those who are disconnected from family and friends and who cannot “find their voice,” to later become school shooters. In *No More Victims*, Frank Peretti (2001, p.28), asserts that “those who have been wounded often become those who wound others.” Strangely enough, the instigating bullying done to the shooter was more teasing and taunting, but escalated into physical violence when the “victim” responded and retaliated. There are numerous programs suggested as resources but seem overwhelming in their complexity and few seem practical. This researcher sought a comprehensive new method to improve students’ communication and behavior. In order to re-pattern ineffective communication patterns and behavior, the solution would need to be systematic. The purpose of this Peace Rug study is to determine its effectiveness in establishing a new and systematic pattern of communicating and behaving after conflicts arise in the school setting.

Statistics

In a recent publication by the National School Safety and Security Services entitled *School-Related Violent Deaths and Shootings 1999-2000*, the following was said about incidences of violence:

In our research, we have found that even in the worst-case scenarios of school-related violent deaths, educators, parents, and the broader school community only seem to hear of select incidents which receive a skewed amount of attention by media, politicians, academicians, and others. We have been quite surprised to note that upon sharing the incidents of school-related violent deaths that we have identified below, the majority of people we meet with can only recall hearing of only one or two of these at the most. (p.1)

On the other hand, Merle Froschl, Director of Educational Equity Concepts Inc., and author of the *Quit It!* teachers' guide on bullying, witnessed 231 incidents of bullying at four public elementary schools in New York City and Framingham, Mass., at an average rate of 4.6 occurrences per three-hour observation period (Hargrove, 2001). A recent CNN report (Courson, 2001, June 6) stated that "Sexual harassment is rampant in the school environment, according to a surveyof some 2,000 students in the eighth through 11th grades." It continued, "Eighty-three percent of girls and seventy-nine percent of boys reported they felt sexually harassed at school" and "Ninety-six percent of the students polled said they know what harassment is. Boys and girls defined the behavior similarly." In *Sticks and Stones*, Maudlin (2002, p.2) quoted an article from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Tonja R. Nansel, 25 April, 2001):

...nearly 30 percent of children report being involved in bullying, either as a bully or as a victim, in the past year – 10 percent as victims, 13 percent as bullies, and 6 percent as both bully and victim. A staggering 8 percent said they were bullied once weekly. (p.2)

Maudlin (2002, p. 2) cited another study from *Bullies and Victims* (Fried & Fried, 1996, p.xi), which found that 76.8 percent of students said that they had been bullied over the course of their middle and high school years. Additionally, 14 percent indicated that they “experienced severe reactions to the abuse.” Another important statistic to consider from *Bullies and Victims* (p. 87) is that “one in four bullies ended up in the correctional system.” Renown expert in bullying, SuEllen Fried, was quoted in the Aspen Daily News (Preskill, 2002) as saying that:

More than 160,000 kids stay home from school in America each day to avoid bullies...and many parents don't realize what's going on in their children's lives. It breaks my heart to think of what kids finally have to do to say, 'Please listen.' You have no idea how many children suffer in silence. (p.1)

Dan Olweus (as cited in Banks, 1997) found that 60% of those characterized as bullies in grades 6-9 had at least one criminal conviction by age 24. Much of the literature on bullying suggested that girls are increasingly involved in bullying and “Girls are involved in more violent crime than they were a decade ago; their murder arrest rate is up 64 percent” (Chesney-Lind & Brown, 1999, p.171). In light of those statistics, the U.S. Department of Education (1996) reported that violence in United States public schools has increased each year for the past five years. In a CNN report, Arce (2001) provided the results of a survey by the Kaiser Foundation and Nickelodeon entitled, *Talking With Kids About Tough Issues* which showed:

Seventy-four percent of 8 to 11-year olds say teasing and bullying occur at their school. As kids get older – 12 to 15-year olds were a separate group in the survey – the number rises to 86 percent, still higher than substance abuse or sex. And both age groups called the teasing and bullying “big problems” that rank higher than racism, AIDS, the pressure to have sex or to try alcohol or drugs. (p.1)

This survey also found that 54 percent of the children responded that they want more information on what to do in a violent or bullying situation. The American Association of School Administrators contributed another statistic that states “Twenty-five percent of American youth drop out of school before age 16” (Brodinsky, 1989, p.7). What might be some reasons students drop out of school? Beck and Malley (1998) shared some thoughts and statistics concerning these issues:

...because they [students] find school a negative experience, they often become disruptive to the academic goals of the institution. Some find their “quality worlds” in gangs that are rapidly becoming as common to schools as the junior prom. According to the U.S. Government (Associated Press, 1998) nearly twice as many teenagers reported gangs in the school in 1995 as they did in 1989, and the number of students victimized by violent crimes has increased by 25%. In the past several months, the horrific American nightmare of teachers and students being gunned down by their schoolmates has repeated itself in Springfield, Oregon; West Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; and Edinboro, Pennsylvania. Community leaders and mental health professionals are seeking frantically to understand what possible conditions could prompt one youngster to kill another. Do some children feel so estranged from the school community that they are devoid of even a modicum of human empathy for their classmates? Do some disaffected students represent a danger to the entire school community? When students do not feel connected to the school community, it ceases to be part of their quality world. Instead, it becomes an alien world, a source of rejection, frustration and estrangement. (p.18)

The statistics from a recent Associated Press article (Johnson, 2002) linked violence to television viewing. This was the first long-term study to investigate the total amount of time individuals spend watching television:

Teenagers who watch more than an hour of television a day during early adolescence are more likely to be violent in later years, researchers say. The rate of violence, including assaults, fights and robberies, increases dramatically if daily TV time exceeds three hours, according to researchers who studied more than 700 people for 17 years. “Our findings suggest that, at least during early adolescence, responsible parents should avoid permitting their children to watch more than one hour of television a day,” said Jeffrey G. Johnson of Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute. “The evidence has gotten to the point where it’s overwhelming,” said Johnson, who led the team of

researchers studying families in two upstate New York counties. Among youths who watched less than an hour of television daily at age 14, just 5.7 percent were involved in aggressive acts by the ages of 16 to 22, the study found. For those who watched between one and three hours, the aggression rate jumped to 22.5 percent, and the rate was 28.8 percent for those who watched more than three hours, the study found. (p.9A)

Observing domestic violence as an important risk factor was stated by The American Psychological Association (1996): “A child’s exposure to the father abusing the mother is the strongest risk factor for transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next” (p.11). The David and Lucille Packard Foundation (1999) had similar concerns:

Researchers estimate that between 3.3 million and 10 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year, and that this exposure can have significant negative effects...(which) may include: aggressive behavior and other conduct problems; depression and anxiety; lower levels of social competence and self-esteem; poor academic performance; and symptoms consistent with posttraumatic stress disorder...(www.futureofchildren.org)

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (January, 2002) found that “only 25 percent of students report that their teachers intervene in bullying situations, while 71 percent of teachers believe they always intervene” (p.6).

Signs of Violence

In *Ghosts from the Nursery – Tracing the Roots of Violence*, authors Karr-Morse and Wiley (1997) stated, “Violence is now epidemic in American society. It dominates our media, permeates our play, steals our loved ones, implodes our families, and claims a growing percentage of our young” (p.13). Moreover, “The grim reality is that a growing percentage of our babies are now gestating in and being born into an environment

perfectly designed to breed rage and despair” (p.14). They listed the following as precursors to the growing epidemic of violence:

...chronic stress or neglect, which affects the development of the fetal or early infant brain; early child abuse and neglect, which undermine focused learning; chronic parental depression; neglect or lack of the stimulation necessary for normal brain development; early loss of primary relationships or breaks in caregiving. (p.15)

Further, Karr-Morse and Wiley (1997) asserted that:

Even where violent behavior does not occur as a direct result of these stressors, maltreatment of a baby may lead to the permanent loss or impairment of key protective factors – such as intelligence, trust, and empathy – that enable many children to survive and even overcome difficult family circumstances and later traumas. (p.15)

Maltreatment can lead to a child not being adequately touched and “there are critical periods and sensitive periods for several key aspects of human development, including the ability to trust or to feel connected to other people” (Karr-Morse & Wiley, p.21). This in turn leads to an unwillingness to be held and not wanting to be touched. Conditions after birth also affect brain chemistry, and these authors shared some interesting combinations of risk factors:

Normal serotonin and noradrenaline levels are extremely important to balanced functioning. Without realizing it, our culture is creating more and more individuals with an imbalance in this delicate equation in the brain. Alcohol, drugs, and other toxic exposures such as lead are being implicated in damage to the genes responsible for these neurochemicals. So are conditions after birth such as abusive, terrifying, or war-torn environments, in which impulsive or reactive behaviors are essential to survive. Researchers suspect that conditions of child neglect, child abuse, gang warfare, and domestic violence are – without our awareness – biologically, as well as socially, feeding the cycle of violent crime. (p.45)

One last set of summaries written by Karr-Morse and Wiley (1997) concerned the early signposts or indicators of future violence:

Abuse and neglect in the first years of life have a particularly pervasive impact. Prenatal development and the first two years are the time when the genetic, organic, and neurochemical foundations for impulse control are being created. It is also the time when the capacities for rational thinking and sensitivity to other people are being rooted – or not – in the child’s personality. (p.45)

New research provides convincing evidence that violent criminals have poorly functioning brains. Low verbal IQ’s, attention problems, impulsivity, poor school performance, inadequate processing of information, inflexibility, restlessness, agitation, and difficulty processing social cues are all characteristics commonly associated with criminal behavior. Adverse conditions during pregnancy are the seeds of significant distortions found in the brains of many violent criminals. The growing number of children who are surfacing at school age with attention deficits and other learning problems is compelling evidence that prenatal neurological damage is an escalating problem, a problem that may become more severe given the recent rise in drug use by children under eighteen. (p.54)

Following these early signs of abuse and neglect, early interventions need to take place for young children. Interventions are also needed to correct the disconnections between children and their main caretakers. This is believed to have a profound effect in stopping future violence. These disconnections are subtler than abuse and neglect, but every bit as damaging (Glasser, 1999). It is important to re-pattern these young brains and to override the damage done by violent patterns during these early years. Re-patterning will lead to the permanent internalization of new and healthier patterns of relating.

In order to be watchful, we must be knowledgeable of other signs of violence. On March 12, 2001, MSNBC.com published the National School Safety Center’s list of characteristics that teachers and parents should watch for in students, including:

1. has tantrums and uncontrollable angry outbursts
2. has been truant, suspended or expelled from school
3. has little or no supervision and support from parents or caring adult
4. prefers reading materials dealing with violent themes, rituals and abuse
5. characteristically resorts to name calling, cursing or abusive language
6. habitually makes violent threats when angry
7. has previously brought a weapon to school

8. has a background of serious disciplinary problems
9. has a background of drug, alcohol or other substance abuse or dependency
10. has few or no close friends
11. is preoccupied with weapons, explosives or other incendiary devices
12. displays cruelty to animals
13. has witnessed or been a victim of neglect or abuse in the home
14. has been bullied and/or bullies or intimidates peers or younger children
15. tends to blame others for difficulties and problems they cause
16. consistently prefers TV shows, reading materials, movies or music expressing violent themes, rituals and abuse
17. reflects anger, frustration and the dark side of life in school writing projects
18. is involved with a gang or an antisocial group on the fringe of peer acceptance
19. is often depressed and has significant mood swings
20. has threatened or attempted suicide (p.1)

The National School Safety Center (as cited in Maudlin, 2002, p.3) estimated that over half a million attacks, shakedowns, and robberies occur in an average month in public secondary schools. Additionally, the National Education Association (as cited in Maudlin, 2002, p.3) estimated that as many as 160,000 students miss school every day because they fear attack.

The phrase “cycle of violence” is a theory not agreed on by all those in the field, but the following reference is worth citing because of the thoughts provoked and issues raised. In a pamphlet, McManus and Head (1999) stated that there are patterns of abuse in the cycle of violence. Stage One is characterized by tension building. Stage Two is battering, and Stage Three is the honeymoon stage. “Unless there is some kind of intervention, the tension will start building again and the cycle will continue over and over” (p. 4).

The Four-Pronged Assessment Model, found in Education World (2000) was the new FBI report on school violence. The following are some behaviors and traits extracted

from a review of 18 school shooting cases as well as input from the nation's leading experts on childhood behavior and violence:

Personality and Behavior of the Student: poor coping skills, low tolerance for frustration, lack of resiliency, resentment over real or perceived injustices, narcissistic (self-centered) behavior (blames others for failures and disappointments), failure to demonstrate empathy for others, alienation from others (consistently behaves as if he/she is different from others), exaggerated sense of entitlement, attitude of superiority, anger-management problems, refusal to take responsibility for own actions (blames others for any failings or shortcomings), intolerance of racial or religious differences, desire to manipulate others, unusual interest in sensational violence, fascination with violence-filled entertainment, and revelation of clues (intentionally or unintentionally) that may signal an impending violent act. (Education World, 2000, p.1)

Family dynamics was the next category the FBI listed. This list helps us to better understand the pattern of behavior and the values of the student's family to ascertain the threat level. The level of threat determines whether or not a student will carry out a stated threat. The FBI attempted to understand the circumstances and stressors in the student's life in order to evaluate the risk level of the threat. The family dynamics considered were: "turbulent parent-child relationship, acceptance of pathological behavior, access to weapons, lack of family intimacy or closeness, no limits on the child's conduct, and intimidation of parents of child" (Education World, 2000, p.2).

The next category was School Dynamics. This observation of student patterns within the school culture is for teachers and administrators to use to better assess the threat level. The dynamics in these patterns are both obvious and subtle:

...tolerance of disrespectful behavior by the student; detachment of student from other students, teachers, and school activities; inequitable discipline; inflexible culture; code of silence among students; pecking order among students (certain groups of students are officially or unofficially given more prestige and respect than others); and unsupervised computer access. (Education World, 2000, p.2)

The last category of the FBI Report was Social Dynamics, which is attempting to understand the student in the community in which he or she lives. Attention should be given to those with whom he socializes outside of school. Examples of those factors that need to be considered are:

Student's access to and choice of media, entertainment, and technology with themes and images of extreme violence; student's choice of reading materials; student's attitudes about drugs, alcohol, and weapons; patterns of behavior of the student's peer group; student's outside school interests; and copycat effect (staff needs to be vigilant in noting disturbing student behavior following a heavily publicized incident of school violence elsewhere). (Education World, 2000, p.2)

The Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center found that "there is no accurate or useful profile of the school bully....The effort to stamp out bullying and school violence should concentrate on "disconnected kids" and their relationships" (Peterson, 2001, p.6D). This leads to the next section that will provide more information on the importance of connecting disconnected youth.

Possible Explanations

There is much literature that examines why anger is so prevalent in our society. In a discussion group in Chicago, Dr. William Glasser stated that [in our country] technology has made great progress over time, but human relationships have not (personal communication, February 1, 2000). Moreover, in a video on violence in schools, homes, and communities, Dr. Glasser (1999) shared his explanation of what happened in several school shootings in Jonesboro, Arkansas at the middle school and in Mississippi and Kentucky. He said that if human progress is defined as people getting along better, then we are not making human progress. Marriages are no better; families are no better; schools are no better. He believed that what is wrong is the way we deal

with people over whom we have some power. In his opinion, success is directly proportional to how people get along; and therefore unsatisfactory relationships [not having connected or successful relationships] lead them to resort to violence. Glasser referred to this problem as external control psychology. It is exemplified by statements such as: "We've got to clamp down." "Make sure this doesn't happen again." and "I can control what you do." He urged us to give up external control psychology and use the new psychology of Choice Theory (all behavior is chosen from inside our heads). His thinking was that "forcing people" results in resistance and leads to violence. He believed that people who use external control are not intentionally doing harm and may be trying to help, but this tends to destroy the relationships between them and others. Additionally, he believed that children who are not well connected at home or at school will tend to embrace violence because of their need for power. This was particularly true when the child is punished at home or school. The child was likely to demonstrate an increased need for love and belonging.

It is Glasser's observation that the perpetrators in Jonesboro were unable to satisfy those two needs. Glasser went on to say that today's students have easy access to weapons. Any child who has violent ideas and wants to attempt violent acts can easily accomplish such deeds. The issue, he believed, is disconnectedness with peers, parents and teachers. The perpetrators were unable to get along with others. They were angry and not motivated to learn. Glasser is well-known for advocating satisfying relationships. When someone is disconnected and one does not have the needed or desired relationships, he/she is unhappy. Glasser believes that punishing someone is inappropriate since punishment is the basis for a lack of connectedness.

Moreover, whenever someone is unhappy, he/she can behave in one of two directions. Some try to find happiness with people and these people do not usually commit violent acts. Others try to take people out of their quality world [see p. 39 for a block quote about quality world] because it is too painful to poorly relate to them. The violent students in Jonesboro were hard to get along with and were seeking pleasure without relationships. They were very impulsive; their future meant nothing; and they had given up on people. It was Glasser's opinion that there are three instigators that give unconnected people pleasure. The first was expressing violence in every kind of activity. Examples are being hard to get along with, shouting out in class, acting as class clown, plugging up toilets, scratching cars, attacking schools over the weekend, getting into fights, loving guns and knives. and hurting people. Another form of pleasure without people was taking addictive drugs; and thirdly, some people resorted to unloving sex that could involve harassment and even rape. Pleasure for them does not involve human relationships and connections. The problem was their inability to get along with others and their resulting anger when failing to do so. This sentiment is exemplified in the statement "if I can't connect with you, I am going to destroy you."

Malley, Beck, and Adorno (2001) have similar concepts, and stated:

The one characteristic common to the students involved in school shootings around the country has been that they all felt detached, alienated, and rejected by mainstream society. They didn't feel like they belonged. This lack of a sense of belonging is at the root of much of the teenage violence that we are witnessing in modern day American society. It is a systemic disturbance that exists at the level of the soul or psyche of America. Teenage violence is symptomatic of society's failure to provide the essential ecological conditions for the full fruition of each of its members. Chief among these conditions is the critical need for each individual to feel a sense of belonging. (p.22)

Malley, Beck, and Adorno (2001) address severe disconnectedness by writing that:

...students' lack of capacity to empathize with their fellow students combined with poor executive reasoning puts them at increased risk for doing harm to others. If they are bullied or tormented by other students, they find it easier to retaliate because they feel no emotional connection to their victims. It is in this state of severe disconnectedness that is at the epicenter of most acts of school violence. (p.22)

In another work, Beck and Malley (1998) discussed how teenagers felt when they were rejected by the dominant group. It was believed that teenagers "internalize the rejection and learn to hate themselves or externalize the rejection and learn to hate others" (p.133). Another possible explanation for school violence was related to parental abandonment. In his book *Lost Boys*, Garbarino (1999) examined school violence and says that the breakdown of human relationships, especially paternal abandonment, is responsible for children ending up "with damaged souls, unable to connect with love to the world around them" (p.38). Baker (1998) believed that school violence occurs when schools fail to meet the emotional needs of "at-risk" students who are predisposed to conduct problems by virtue of disturbed developmental patterns. "Children with tendencies toward violence have different developmental trajectories. They arrive at the school door ill-equipped to negotiate the complexities of school life and to engage in a meaningful way with the community of the school (p.32). Large and impersonal schools have also been associated with school violence (Alexander & Curtis, 1995; Eccles et al., 1993; Meier, 1995, 1996; Newmann, 1981; Olweus, 1991, 1993). The feeling of disconnectedness is much more common when a student attends a larger school.

A possible link between the capacity for affiliativeness (or connecting with others) and aggression was gathered from the research of Dr. Grazyna Kochanska at the

University of Iowa and Dr. Mary Rothbart at the University of Oregon (as cited in Karr-Morse & Wiley, 1997):

Affiliativeness encompasses the concept of sociability and the ability to get along well with other people. Here there is a convergence between temperament theorists and attachment theorists who assert that the primary bond between the infant and the caregiver, if established in a normal and healthy manner, lays the foundation for empathy, or the sense of connection with other people as a part of one's self. Some researchers believe that affiliativeness is better as warmth or openness to the experience of love. There is some speculation about whether this is an inborn or an environmentally created trait. Regardless of its source, the capacity to connect with other people is clearly a factor that protects against aggression and can be taught in the earliest months and years... [these systems] are capacities that appear to be protective against the development of aggression. (p.145)

In a CNN study, Arce (2001) asserted that, "The pain brought about by taunts and shunning at school appears to have played a role in recent fatal shootings – evidence that this unrelieved stress may explode into tragedy." In this same article, a friend of the shooter in the recent Santee, California shooting described the shooter. "His ears stuck out, he was small, skinny, had a high voice, so people always picked on him because he was the little kid"(p.1). There is a great deal of literature that profiles school shooters as the victims of previous and repetitive bullying. These victims are unable to find their voice and tend to bottle up or "stuff" their anger until it erupts in a shooting or another violent act. These perpetrators are bullies and they too have been bullied for a significant amount of time. Arce (2001) referred to Colorado's Columbine incident:

Like the teenagers at Colorado's Columbine High School who shot their classmates because they felt like outcasts, there are suspicions that Williams, 15, [California shooter] might have been prone to attack other students because he was the target of teasing and taunting. (p.1)

Another study from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Resnick et al., 1997) yielded findings that share how important it is to feel connected:

Specifically, we find consistent evidence that perceived caring and connectedness to others is important in understanding the health of young people today. While the physical presence of a parent is important, the article stated that what is more significant is “feelings of warmth, love, and caring from parents. (p.830)

Moreover, “school connectedness, along with an adolescent’s sense of connectedness to parents, family, and other adults, serves as a protective factor against a variety of risk behaviors” (p.831). Another explanation for the violence seen among young people was given by Mickel (1994):

They are taught that when one is confronted with a problem, violence is the best solution. From watching the repeated showings of murders on TV news as well as facing bullying and threats on the streets, they come to believe that brutality and crime are a constant threat to them. Therefore, violence becomes the solution to this threat. (p.9)

Since the perpetrators tend to be younger and younger, some literature suggested that possible solutions lie in addressing younger and younger populations. Irvine (2002) wrote in a recent news article:

Nearly two dozen students from a nearby elementary school in Chicago – ages 10 to 14 – were arrested for mob action. There had been tension and taunting between the two schools. A crowd of students from a rival elementary school approached fast, swinging baseball bats and planks at any child in their path, and resulted in 18 students being treated for cuts and bruises at hospitals afterwards. Even some Chicago police veterans were startled at the age of the children involved. But child experts say that while school violence is down overall, the fight is one more sign that offending students are getting younger. “You need to teach kids social skills as much today as you need to teach them how to read,” said Kevin Dwyer, an expert in child violence and bullying who once advised former Attorney General Janet Reno. “Even in well-to-do communities, kids are raising themselves these days.” (p.9A)

Authors Robin Karr-Morse and Meredith S. Wiley (1997), in their book *Ghosts from the Nursery – Tracing the Roots of Violence*, explored the link between violent

behavior and abuse and neglect in the first two years of life. They studied young offenders and saw an early pattern of “aggression, bullying, tantrums, and coercive interactions with others” (p.7). More specifically, they said:

We must look before preadolescence, before grade school, before preschool to the cradle of human formation in the first thirty-three months of life. Those months, including nine months of prenatal development and the first two years after birth (33 months), harbor the seeds of violence for a growing percentage of American children... The ghosts of children lost to rage and despair, overlooked or abused by a community unaware of their existence, do retaliate. These children – like all children – “do unto others.” It may be easy and politically expedient to ignore them or close our eyes to the appalling circumstances of their lives while they are voiceless and powerless – little bodies tucked away where no one is looking. But these children – grown larger and angrier – are swelling the rising tide of violent young offenders in our communities. Rage-filled adolescents only seem to come out of nowhere. They come, too often, from the nursery. (p.9)

In the April 26, 2002 school shooting in Erfurt, Germany, a very angry young man on a shooting rampage took the lives of thirteen teachers, a school secretary, two girls, and policemen before he killed himself. In the news accounts, the precipitating factor was presumed to be his expulsion from school a few weeks earlier. This was speculated due to the fact that so many authority figures were killed. In trying to make sense of this tragedy, however, other factors need to be considered as well. Rising (2002) stated that he “often fought with teachers and had bad relations with his parents.” Robert Steinhäuser’s parents were divorced, and he lived with his grandparents. It is speculation, but it is probable that his disconnections with adults led to this violence.

Factors Needed for Possible Solutions

Dr. William Glasser (1968, 1992, 1998) has written extensively about the importance of creating a school climate which fosters a sense of connection for “at risk” students. He asserts that youth have a basic need to feel connected in school; and research

has supported Glasser's conviction that youth are most likely to succeed in school when they feel connected to peers, teachers, and what they are learning. Richardson and Wubbolding (2001) summarized research studies by Wehlage (1989) and Resnick et al. (1998) in the following:

Wehlage (1989) and his colleagues found the quality of the student/teacher relationship to be the primary distinguishing factor for effective schools for at-risk students. Based on a longitudinal study of over 12,000 students, perceived school connectedness was found to be one of the most critical protective factors against a variety of risk behaviors (Resnick, 1998). These authors described "at risk" youth as "products of disconnection." (p.35)

Richardson and Wubbolding (2001) believe the solution involves connecting students, and they strongly exhort our schools to facilitate such connections. "Educators must resist the natural temptation to over focus on short-term solutions (i.e. suspensions, detentions) and visualize the longer-term benefits of removing barriers to success and creating opportunities to meet their basic needs for connection and competence" (p.36). They also looked at similar work by Palmatier (1998), who encouraged educators and helping professionals "to challenge current delivery systems and develop creative ideas for removing barriers which inhibit students' sense of connection and competence (cited in Richardson & Wubbolding, 2001). Glasser (1999) shared on video that he believes we can set up the conditions that will allow us to meet students' needs for power, love and belonging. Teachers could play an important role in preventing this violence. They should reach out to students, give information that they care, and let the students know that they are not going to threaten and punish them. He believes that "hurting" students are supersensitive to threatening and punishment, and they need someone to get close to them. Glasser believes that this is absolutely necessary if we are going to improve our

relations with each other. He believes we can create a world so that people get along better with many people. Schools have a responsibility to supplement the relationships that are not functioning properly at home. Glasser's last exhortation on the video presentation was, "Our response as a human being needs to be to love others as we want to be loved." Along those same lines, Malley, Beck and Adorno (2001) said, "Children who feel that they belong to a community will have an increased capacity for empathizing with members of that community. Where there is empathy, there is a reduced likelihood of violence" (p.22). In an earlier work, Beck and Malley (1998) gave additional information about giving students a sense of belonging and brought depth to the concept of a quality world:

A quality world is a place in which people feel that they belong, are affirmed, and are accepted. In the past, the nuclear family was the primary source for meeting an individual's belongingness needs. However, with the breakdown of the family, schools have become the next most important source for meeting the critical developmental needs for belonging. Unfortunately, there is evidence that current pedagogical practices fail to engender a sense of belongingness for many students; an increasing number of them feel alienated and estranged from their schools and seek their quality worlds elsewhere. The inexhaustible drive for technological advancement has overshadowed the primary element that makes for a sustainable human community, namely, positive and enduring human relationships. (p.18)

They also said that it is unfortunate for many students that "conventional classroom practices not only fail to meet the students' needs for belonging, but they may actually intensify feelings of rejection, inferiority, and alienation" (p.21). In their later work, Malley, Beck and Adorno (2001) summarized their solution, regarding caring communities: "By transforming schools into caring communities in which all children feel they belong, are cared for, and loved, schools will not only eliminate violence in the schools but also pave the way for the full fruition of human potential" (p.25).

Sometimes neither schools nor parents have the solutions. Rose Arce (2001, p.1) stated that “A new report finds bullying and teasing tops the list of children’s school troubles and that many students say talking with their parents does little to ease the stress.” Moreover, the article said, “some kids sometimes don’t know how to tell their parents.” One parent said, “We sit at a computer and ignore our kid for an hour. We have too much going on, and we separate ourselves from our families” (p.2). Arce quoted Dominic Cappello, an expert on parent-child communications, who said: “When your child starts kindergarten, you have to start conversations about how you respect people...This is very serious. It is not just bullying and teasing. These are threats of violence” (p.2). Hazelden and Johnson Institute were of the same conviction (Johnson Institute, 1999, p. 10) that there is a Violence Continuum with “shooting someone with a gun” listed at the top of the continuum and “eye rolling” listed at the lower end of the continuum. Moreover, if lower-end violence as eye rolling is shown, it is still considered violence. It is non-physical, but can escalate to physical violence if unchecked. Their workbook (Johnson Institute, 1999) then proceeded to encourage a non-tolerance violence policy in the school setting. Such a policy should consider disrespecting behavior at the low end of the continuum to be violence.

In an article in a Louisville newspaper (Gostomski, 2001), reference was made to the Kaiser survey mentioned earlier. “Of all the things in the study, the most striking was the disconnect between parents and children,” said Lauren Asher, spokeswoman for the Kaiser Family Foundation. The newspaper article also quoted Dominic Cappello, author of *Ten Talks Parents Must Have With Their Children About Violence* as saying:

Parents have to take the lead in violence prevention...Part of the problem children face is that they are flooded with different definitions of bullying and ideas about what is acceptable and what is not. Some parents are very open and don't think hitting is much of a problem, and some parents think it's OK some of the time, and some don't think it should be tolerated and some think it is illegal. And then you have 30 kids going to kindergarten with 30 different definitions of what is acceptable and what is not. (p. H2)

The newspaper article suggested parents speak early and often with their children about what is and what is not acceptable behavior. Family and community are urged to define bullying together. Parental involvement in their children's lives is very important and dialogue should be properly modeled. Family communication should never include hurtful teasing. In *Sticks and Stones*, Maudlin (2002, p. 72) said, "As parents we need to model positive and respectful behavior to our kids. Just as bullies often learn their techniques of verbal and physical abuse from watching their parents, so too, children of victims look to their parents for how to solve problems." Modeling and teaching compassion for others were mentioned to insure that children do not become bullies (Maudlin, 2002, p. 72). Additionally, "when respect is lifted up as the standard for the school and home...great things can be unleashed" (p.77). "By setting the tone for what is respectful and safe behavior for the school and the home, a school can improve its social health...and create an open and safe environment for learning" (p.77).

Mickel (1994) believed we can actually choose not to be violent. In order to accomplish this, he asserted we must teach that:

Violence is an irresponsible choice and as such we can choose a more effective behavior. There is no way we can control the world around us, but we can choose our behaviors in response to the world. In the place of violence we can choose to act responsibly in order to meet our needs. We can select our behaviors. This is where we can choose to not use violence, but another way to responsibly act in the real world. (p.12)

One of the behaviors we need to choose is that of connecting with one another.

Karr-Morse and Wiley (1997) offered more insight into connecting:

In spite of our preoccupation with independence, autonomy, and self-reliance, we are born dependent on others, and we continue to need others emotionally at every stage of development. The capacity to maintain our baby desire to communicate who we are emotionally and to read this in other people is essential for healthy adult functioning with families, at school, at work, and at play. Emotional connections between individuals are the linchpin of any community's ability to maintain pro-social behavior, and the growing absence of those connections is reflected in social incompetence, estrangement, mental illness, and violence. (p.295)

Students who have been bullied need to connect with those in authority and with the bullies. In *No More Victims*, Frank Peretti (2001) described his turning point. A teacher noticed he looked ill one day and asked how he was. This was the first time that someone in authority was "actually asking about me...and seemed genuinely concerned" (p.45). Because he was too intimidated to express himself orally, Peretti made a decision to write a letter to this teacher telling everything he could remember about the incidences of the past few years. Many changes followed. It is Peretti's recommendation that students who are victims of bullying try talking to someone in authority and also try talking to the bully (p.47). He said, "Bullies ...sometimes can be reached with a little bit of honesty and friendship, if you can talk with them one-on-one" (p.47). That place needs to be a private place "away from friends" (p.47). Bully expert SuEllen Fried (as cited in Preskill, 2002) discussed the power of words and the importance of relationships at a conference in Aspen:

Kids need to learn to use words. They can agree, offer a compliment, or make a joke, use humor.... When an adult walks by [an incident of bullying] and says nothing, it's 10 times worse than if they stand there and cheer them on.... The answer is not fences and security; it's with relationships between people. (p.2)

Role-playing and modeling are also beneficial for preparing victims to be able to confront their bully. "Role playing and processing situations together with peers will help them think through ahead of time what their response should be" (Maudlin, 2002, p.38). This author said, "Teaching, modeling, practicing, and instilling respect at every level of interaction is the best tool against bullying" (p. 7).

Review of Several Conflict Resolution Programs

This section will review the results of several well-known conflict resolution programs being used in numerous school systems. The most prevalent of national programs is the Committee on Children's (1997) Second Step Violence Prevention Program. The National Safe and Drug Free Schools Program has endorsed this program and encouraged its use in as many schools as possible. Karen S. Harkleroad (2000) of The University of Sarasota [now called Argosy University of Sarasota] described the program and gave the results of her research study which evaluated the effectiveness of the popular Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum:

The Second Step Curriculum is designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behaviors in middle school students and to increase their social competencies. The program utilizes a cognitive-behavioral approach to develop skills in problem solving, impulse control, anger management, and empathy (Committee for Children, 1997).... Seventh grade students from two middle schools in Chatsworth, Georgia, participated in the analysis. One group of middle school students was designated as the training group, and the other group as the wait-list control group. Data was collected using the Knowledge and Skills Survey Instrument (Committee for Children, 1997), and the Bully Survey Instrument (Hoover & Oliver, 1996), a self-report questionnaire. The Knowledge and Skills Survey Instrument evaluated prosocial skill development, and the Bully Survey Instrument measured the frequencies of bullying behaviors.... A quasi-experimental approach was employed using a pretest/posttest nonrandomized control group design. T- Tests for independent and dependent samples were used to compare the scores of pretest and posttest measures on the Knowledge and Skills Survey for both the training group and the wait-list control group. Chi square tests were used to compare the frequencies of bullying behavior between

the training group and the wait-list control group, and to compare the frequencies of bullying behavior between pretest and posttest data from the Bully Survey Instrument for the training group.... Significant differences were revealed from pretest to posttest measure on the Knowledge and Skills Survey for the training group indicating an increase in pro-social skill development. (p.iii)

Since the Second Step Program is one of the leading programs for conflict resolution, attention and emphasis needs to be given to its outcomes. Of particular importance are the negative findings regarding its effectiveness in bringing behavior change. Harkleroad (2000) wrote:

There were no significant differences for the frequencies of bullying behaviors for the students participating in the program. These findings suggest that the Second Step Program was effective for prosocial skill development, but not necessarily behavior change. The addition of a more comprehensive violence prevention program was recommended to enhance the effects of the social skills component of the Second Step Program. The use of more efficient behavioral measuring devices and the provision for a longitudinal study were indicated to determine behavior change. (p.iv)

James Thomas Stewart's (2000) doctoral dissertation at The University of Sarasota [now called Argosy University of Sarasota] explored several current conflict resolution programs. His study used two instruments, the Peace by Peace mediation packet and The Revised Student Attitudes About Conflict Scale from the New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution (Jenkins, 1995). Stewart (2000) wrote:

This study reviewed existing literature and research on school conflict resolution programs. The purpose of this study was to evaluate a conflict resolution program utilizing peer mediation in a Hillsborough County, Florida middle school and determine if participation in mediation training brings about changes in students' knowledge and attitudes concerning conflict and the approaches to conflict resolution. Employing a customized assessment instrument, specifically the study concentrated on the influence of peer mediation on four underlying factors affecting the knowledge and attitude measured by The Revised Student Attitudes About Conflict Scale. These factors include the students' attachment and/or commitment to their school, the students' self-concept and their relationship to their peers, the students' knowledge of approaches to conflict and problem solving, and the students' perception of their skills and social relations abilities....

The Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design was utilized in the evaluation. Data for this evaluation was secured at a middle school in Hillsborough County, Florida. The target population for this evaluation consisted of 70 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who were randomly placed in the experimental group or control group. The coordinator of the peer mediation program conducted the peer mediation training with the experimental group using the Peace By Peace mediation packet.... Results indicated that middle school students who received peer mediation training and those who did not receive peer mediation training had similar school attachment and commitment scores. The self-concept and peer mediation scores of middle school students were not significantly affected by peer mediation training. However, peer mediation training did produce a significant effect on middle school students' knowledge of problem solving and conflict resolution skills as well as social skills and interpersonal relations scores. (pp.iii-iv)

Christine B. Arize-Samuel (1999) wrote a dissertation for The University of Sarasota [now called Argosy University of Sarasota], which addressed the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) that was being used in five Atlanta Public Schools. RCCP was created in 1985 by the Educators for Social Responsibility Metropolitan (NY) Area and the New York City Board of Education. Arize-Samuel (1999) said:

Some of the conclusions in this study were: (a) Participating in RCCP has made a difference in how conflict is handled; (b) Skills acquired in RCCP are applicable in one's personal life; (c) There is a difference in how relationships are handled when RCCP skills are used; (d) Parents' awareness and participation in RCCP encourages students to use RCCP skills; (e) Faculty/staff employ RCCP skills as they help students in the educational process.... The results of this study suggest that by empowering students, conflicts can be resolved by peers. It also suggests that parental support, as well as faculty/staff, is needed in order for students to achieve success in resolving their conflicts. (pp. ii-iii)

Powell (as cited in Arize-Samuel, 1999) reviewed the Fighting Fair Model from the Peace Education Foundation used in Florida. He also reviewed other programs in Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, and Georgia. He offered many criticisms related to conflict resolution and peer mediation programs:

Conflict resolution and peer mediation training programs have been adopted primarily on faith; there is little evidence to validate their effectiveness (as cited by Johnson et al., 1995). Similarly it was stated that conflict resolution and peer mediation training programs have poor face validity. Webster (1993) notes

explicitly that conflict resolution programs (a) have not been proven to work, (b) intrude on academic teaching time, and (c) are not cost effective.... Specific questions that, if answered, could demonstrate the effectiveness of conflict training programs: (a) Do middle school students actually learn the conflict resolution procedures taught? and (b) Can they apply the procedure to actual conflict situations?....As with other school-based conflict resolution programs, however, there is no credible research evidence that peer mediation is able to prevent serious violence (Miller, 1994). "To date, there has not been a controlled study using randomly selected and randomly assigned students," (p. 8) says Dan Kmitta, National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME's), coordinator of research and evaluation....According to Marvin Daniels, coordinator of the high school mediation program in Cambridge, Massachusetts, "peer mediation has been misunderstood, misinterpreted, and transformed into something it was never meant to be. It is being used as a form of discipline, or as a prerequisite for suspension." (p. 8)

These studies did not suggest significant increases in the students' attachment to one another nor were there significant changes in the students' behaviors. This is noteworthy because these are the two main factors that the literature shows will make a significant contribution as a conflict resolution tool. Therefore, these two factors have become the focus of this study which addresses the effectiveness of The Peace Rug conflict resolution tool. Johnson et al.(1997) posed two additional standards of effectiveness that should be considered when measuring the effectiveness of The Peace Rug. These standards raised the following questions: Did the students learn the procedure(s), and can they actually apply what they have learned to a real situation?

This investigator has personally not found any of the above programs or others similar to them to be effective in meeting the needs of her specific student population. The investigator finds peer mediation to be a poor and inappropriate model for use with her population of pre-kindergarten and early elementary students. The above tools and programs involve the exclusive use of peer mediation. Developmentally, few young elementary students are able to effectively serve as a peer mediator in order to facilitate

reconciliation among their peers. A second problem is access to sufficient time, which often results in the interruption of classes. Intensive instructional blocks in each classroom will not permit the flow of students to and from rooms to facilitate peer mediation throughout each day. A third issue with peer mediation is that the trained mediators are not usually randomly selected. Many of the “chosen” students, unless there is personal maturity in this area, also become prideful which further separates them from those whom they are trying to help. If there is a general feeling among students that the mediator selection was discriminatory, then there are feelings of disconnection from the beginning. Additionally, those students who need mediation are not given the opportunity to find their own voices, and they often feel even more helpless when a mediator is needed.

Teacher resistance is also an issue. Educational accountability has led to constant change in the teaching profession. Teachers are bombarded with many new reading, science, and math programs which are added to an already full curriculum. Many teachers become hesitant to do “one more program,” to go through extensive training, and to teach additional material. If the school counselor were to teach the material and the students “do it themselves,” then it would be acceptable. However, the above programs specifically require extensive training for classroom teachers as well as for the peer mediators. Staff development time is often used to address the academic curriculum, so there is no time for the extensive teacher training required by most of these counseling programs. Peer mediators would also miss large chunks of instructional time for any training they would have in addition to possible on-going peer mediation activities. Programs that involve parents are also not practical for the investigator’s population.

Students often teach their parents material, but only a small percentage of parents would be able to complete any formal training required at the school site due to their work schedules and other obligations.

The above programs and tools are highly verbal and much too complicated for both a young student population and a population of English language learners (ELLs). Lastly, the literature lacks a conflict resolution program or tool that deals with any form of disrespecting at the low end of the violence continuum. Emphasis is given to the physically aggressive end of a violence continuum. The investigator holds the conviction that a true zero tolerance policy against violence must deal with both ends of the continuum (the non-physical and the physical). This is crucial if one's purpose is to reduce and eradicate all incidences of violence on a school campus. The investigator also believes that if incidences at the non-physical end of the violence continuum are dealt with systematically on a daily basis, then there will be fewer, if any, incidences at the physically aggressive end of the violence continuum.

Some other interventions bear mentioning. William Modzeleski, Director of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, helped to write a response to the Secret Service's study of school shooters. He listed other factors that he believed were not addressing this national problem. The following quote by Modzeleski appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times (Dedman, 2000, October 16): "[After Columbine] the nation's schools have been bombarded with ways to 'prevent' school shootings: metal detectors, SWAT teams, profiles, warning signs, checklists, zero-tolerance policies, even software to compare a student's actions with past attacks" (p.1). These approaches are "unlikely to be helpful" and could be dangerous. Modzeleski also

said, “We’ve had 40 shooting cases in 30 years. We have a million cases of bad behavior daily in schools. Those can’t be ignored” (p.2). SWAT teams are not recommended because most attacks are over before police arrive. No one profile fits all situations. If a student is expelled for a minor infraction, it could be the spark for the student to return to school with a gun. Metal detectors lack effectiveness because shooters usually make no effort to conceal their weapons (Dedman, p.1). Another author of this report, Robert A. Fein, suggested a peace curriculum (deLeon, The Spokesman-Review, 2002, p.2). This study will explore one such peace curriculum.

This qualitative research project will study the effects of The Peace Rug program as a conflict resolution tool or peace curriculum. The subsequent sections will deal specifically with the purpose that the research intends to accomplish. This study’s research questions, its impact and contribution to the existing body of knowledge, and its discovery of common themes is hoped to benefit all children and adults who desire peaceful relationships.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine a communication and conflict resolution tool in a northwest Georgia elementary school and to determine if participation in The Peace Rug process brings about changes in these students' handling of conflict and whether it is an effective and valuable approach for conflict resolution. Secondly, the investigator wished to determine the acceptance by students and teachers of The Peace Rug as measured by frequency of use and the quality of their experiences including any possible changes made. This qualitative study is primarily descriptive and narrative in style. This chapter is divided into the following major areas: research design; selection of subjects; instrumentation; data gathering procedures; assumptions or limitations; and analysis.

Research Design

The current study was qualitative in design. A collection of audiotapes, photographs, stories, and responses were utilized to a fuller narrative story about The Peace Rug's degree of influence. This descriptive study took place in the natural classroom and school setting. The design was emergent and flexible. The semi-structured interviews of both students and teachers helped to answer the research questions. Student interviews lasted approximately fifteen minutes and teacher interviews lasted approximately twenty minutes. However, the researcher reserved the right to extend the

time of any interview as well as the number of questions if the researcher felt that additional interview questions were appropriate springboards for further discussion related to the research topic.

In Marshall and Rossman's (1999) book *Designing Qualitative Research*, the main characteristics of qualitative research are given: "takes place in the natural world, uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, is emergent rather than tightly prefigured, and is fundamentally interpretive" (p.3). The qualitative researcher "views social phenomenon holistically, systematically reflects on who she is in the inquiry, is sensitive to her personal biography and how it shapes the study, and uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted and interactive" (p.3).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher developed a set of guiding questions. These questions were not utilized as a script, but served as a springboard for instigating communication with subjects. The questions were all open-ended and were available to the interviewer for possible use with students or teachers to facilitate their involvement. Moustakas (1994) stated:

The phenomenological interview involves an informal, interactive process and utilizes open-ended comments and questions. Although the primary researcher may in advance develop a series of questions aimed at evoking a comprehensive account of the person's experience of the phenomenon, these are varied, altered, or not used at all when the [participant] shares the full story of his or her experience of the bracketed question. (p.114)

Selection of Subjects

This study utilized a purposeful, non-random, selected sample of students and teachers. Subjects were students and teachers from a pre-kindergarten to third grade school in an urban setting in northwest Georgia. The investigator sought interviews from

all thirty-two classrooms, using an on-going sampling design. The entire teaching staff of this elementary school was asked to participate in the study by a letter of invitation, and those who sign an informed consent form were a part of the study. The researcher had over 100 more returned Informed Consent letters giving permission to interview 100 additional students, but time did not permit the researcher to interview those additional students.

During the data collection period, the researcher interviewed the 60 student subjects without prior knowledge regarding whether they had used The Peace Rug or not. The students were not selected because of a prior knowledge that they used or did not use The Peace Rug, but were simply the first 60 subjects discovered.

Instrumentation

The researcher was responsible for data collection in this study. In January 2003, oral questions were asked of the students and teachers to describe their experience (see Instrument Interview Questions below) and were recorded using an audiocassette recorder. If the researcher sensed after asking the official interview questions that a subject's experiences had not been fully explored, the researcher asked some additional springboard and open-ended questions. The recorded dialogue was then transcribed into written narratives by a professional neutral to this study. Examining narratives and highlighting common themes accomplished data analysis.

To determine the impact of the use of The Peace Rug process, the following sampling of oral interview questions were asked of students, with the answers recorded on audiotape(s):

The questions asked of students were as follows:

1. Have you ever used The Peace Rug?
2. Tell me about it...
3. How did you feel when you used it?
4. How did it change you?
5. How did it change the other person(s)?
6. How did it change the problem?
7. Is there anything else you want to tell me about your story?

The teachers were also asked questions to solicit open-ended narratives. These semi-structured guided interview questions also served as springboards for additional discovery:

1. Has The Peace Rug ever been used in your classroom?
2. Tell me about it...
3. Did your students learn the procedures?
4. Were they easy to learn?
5. If your students used the Peace Rug process, what do you think their experience was?
6. What, if anything, has changed for you?
7. Is there a change in the number of incidences of conflict in your classroom since the students began using The Peace Rug?

8. What could you tell me about some of the kinds of changes you have noticed?
9. How has the climate changed?
10. What are any other perceptions of its use and impact?
11. Please describe any feelings you have associated with its use.
12. How do you think your students can apply this to actual situations?

No videotapes were used as instruments in this research study in order to protect the privacy and anonymity of the students and teachers. However, two archival videos concerning The Peace Rug, produced separately from this study, added richness to this research. One 20 minute video by three teachers at one elementary school explained to a staff at another elementary school their perceived effectiveness and value of The Peace Rug. The other 4-minute video, often used to share with educators, families, and those in business, gave a thumbnail presentation of pictures, testimonials, and an explanation of The Peace Rug.

Assumptions or Limitations

An assumption is that the researcher will effectively choose to set aside his/her own biases and expectations both in the process of data collection and data analysis. Moustakas (1994) called this “epoche,” a Greek word meaning to stay away from or abstain. An effective qualitative researcher is required to “be alert, to look with care, to see what is really there and to stay away from everyday habits of knowing things, people, and events” (p.85). Moustakas (1994) said that researchers should “allow whatever it is before us in consciousness to disclose itself so that we may see with new eyes in a naïve

and completely open manner” (p.86). This genuine looking is to precede reflecting, judging, or reaching conclusions.

The following limitations concerning methodology for this research study are acknowledged. Students who did not obtain parental support further limited the sample of the study. Only those students returning their consent forms were involved in the study. There could have been students with very relevant information for this study, but they were not included for this reason. A last limitation involves the fact that an experimental study was inappropriate because of the numerous variables to be investigated. A qualitative study was much more appropriate. However, by executing a qualitative study rather than an experimental study, the researcher was not able to substantiate cause and effect that The Peace Rug process significantly diminishes conflict. However, the researcher attempted to illuminate and clarify the relationship of The Peace Rug process to conflict resolution in a school by examining the students’ and teachers’ perceptions and their experiences with this process.

Procedures

The researcher visited all classrooms in the school in January 2003 and invited the students to be in the sample. The researcher’s comments explaining the upcoming informed consent procedures and interviews can be found in Appendices G and H. The letters that were sent to their parents will be read and explained. The researcher distributed both the cover letter entitled Letter to Parents of Student Participants (Appendix E and F) and the Informed Consent Form (Appendix G and H). Each of these documents was in English on one side and in Spanish on the other side. Each student took home a total of two (2) pages, stapled together. Next, the researcher distributed two

documents (in English) to each teacher at the elementary school: the Letter to Teacher Participants (Appendix I) and the Informed Consent Document for Teachers (Appendix J). The researcher collected all of the Informed Consent documents. At the time of the interview, each participating student was assigned a number such as 1, 2, or 3 by which he or she was identified throughout the entire study. The sample of students was interviewed one at a time and the answers were taped onto audiocassette tapes. The dialogue was transcribed later for analysis purposes. The students were instructed to refer to other students in their stories as “a boy or a girl,” to protect the anonymity of their classmates. Any students who did not have the signed Informed Consent documentation did not have an interview session. However, they were not made to feel punished or excluded. The student interviews took place in the researcher’s office within the school building.

Teacher interviews were conducted individually in his or her classroom or in the researcher’s office. The same procedure that was used with the students was used with the teachers. The teachers were identified using letters of the alphabet. The interview dialogue between the researcher and the teachers was recorded on audiocassette tapes and later transcribed for analysis. The documents in Appendices G and H assured subject confidentiality. Both the tapes and the transcripts were kept in a secure area, and both confidentiality and privacy continued to be protected. In a fashion similar to other qualitative studies, the researcher conducted the interviews. However, to insure that the researcher conducted herself with utmost integrity, professionalism, adherence to guidelines, and neutrality, arrangements were made for another adult to be present during

all student interviews as a monitor or witness. Additionally, a neutral party verified each transcribed interview for accuracy before the tapes were to be destroyed.

The following instruments are found or inserted in the Appendices of this document:

1. Appendix A: the two Lesson Plans used by the school counselor to teach The Peace Rug process to all of the students during routine guidance lessons in the Fall of 2002, for all thirty-two classrooms.
2. Appendix B: a picture of The Peace Rug displaying both the official Instructions and the Audiocassette that accompany each Peace Rug kit
3. Appendix C: a Transcript of the Audiocassette Message.
4. Appendix D: the Interview Questions for Students and Teachers.
5. Appendix E: Letter to Parents of Student Participants (in English).
6. Appendix F: Letter to Parents of Student Participants (in Spanish.)
7. Appendix G: Informed Consent to Parents of Student Participants (in English).
8. Appendix H: Informed Consent to Parents of Student Participants (in Spanish).
9. Appendix I: Letter to Teacher Participants.
10. Appendix J: Informed Consent Document for Teachers.
11. Appendix K: Lesson Plan to Explain Informed Consent and the Procedure for Interviews.
12. Appendix L: Student Narratives on Frequency of Use
13. Appendix M: Student Narratives on Reported Experiences
14. Appendix N: Teacher Narratives on Frequency of Use
15. Appendix O: Teacher Narratives on Reported Experiences

The above procedures are available for anyone wishing to replicate this study in this local area, another area of the country, or other areas of the world for the express purposes of research only. The Peace Rug kit is copyrighted, trademarked, patented, and service marked, so permission from the corporation would be required before any research is initiated. Results of any studies would be highly valued. Contact may be made to The Peace Rug Co., Inc. at www.peacerug.com.

Analysis

The Peace Rug process was taught to the students at the school under investigation in September of 2002. In January 2003 the researcher set up the student and teacher interviews, and in February 2003 narratives were collected from subjects who consented to participate. This allowed enough time for the students to have had some experience with the process and to be better able to evaluate their experience with it. As each interview was transcribed, each narrative was then studied and coded to detect trends in the data. All of the narratives were organized to discover common themes and patterns, and then compiled to tell a story. More specifically, data was coded and organized into tables or charts for understanding and explanation. Units of meaning were assigned equal value regardless of whether the material gathered was several paragraphs or a phrase. Next, the related units of meaning were clustered and given a thematic label. There was clustering and labeling within each major theme in the feedback, including grouping any sub-themes that arose. Archival photographs (permission previously granted) belonging to The Peace Rug Company also told additional stories about The Peace Rug and its value in the lives of the participants.

There was an analysis of data to specifically answer each of the research questions. The first research question regarding the extent that the students used The Peace Rug involved frequency and was answered through the accumulation of information collected from one or more of the pertinent interview questions. The second research question was addressed similarly: have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug to indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool? Any themes and sub-themes focusing on effectiveness and value were charted as such. Analysis of the third research question was a matter of looking at the charted information from teachers: to what extent do the teachers perceive frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students? The fourth and last research question was also answered from discovery and then summarized: how do the teachers perceive and describe their reported experiences when allowing their students to use The Peace Rug? The findings related to these research questions are presented in Chapters Four and Five. As trends in the data were reported, narrative data and artifacts were used to substantiate the results.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Restatement of Purpose

The focus of this research study was to determine the effectiveness of The Peace Rug process and to investigate its value within an educational context. The researcher considered the participants' frequency of use of The Peace Rug and the quality of their experiences concerning The Peace Rug process to demonstrate its effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool. The results of the data collection and analysis of data are presented in the following discussions that focus on each of the four research questions:

1. To what extent have the students used The Peace Rug?
2. Have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug that indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool?
3. To what extent do the teachers see frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students?
4. How do the teachers describe their own experiences and the experiences of their students concerning the Peace Rug including any possible changes that took place?

Each table to follow in this chapter consists of either paraphrased or direct quotations given by students and teachers, rather than the researcher's interpretation of such comments. This procedure is used to maintain the integrity of the data and to reduce

the likelihood of researcher bias. The results of the data collection and analysis of data presented in the first of the four research questions will now be addressed.

Discussion on Frequency of Use

There is a sense, based on themes in the narratives, that the students primarily used The Peace Rug more than once and used it over several years. The students' responses were varied concerning the extent used. Out of the 60 students who were interviewed, only three students (#46, #55, #56) said they had not personally used The Peace Rug. Student #46 stated that he had seen it used, even though he had not used it himself. He said, "I have not used The Peace Rug but have seen it used in the classroom. [I] Learned what to say if [I] needed to use it." After the interview, Student #55 asked the researcher to teach it to him so he "would know what to do now and would use it." Student #56 was absent when it was taught, but indicated he had seen others use it. He asked to learn the script after the interview and said that he wished to use The Peace Rug now. Four students (#18, #32, #34, #37) stated that they had seen others use it but did not indicate whether or not they had used it personally. Complete responses listed in Appendix M suggest that these particular students knew a lot about it and were positive about the changes produced by The Peace Rug activity.

A summary based on their narratives or responses is that 53 students out of the 60 students in the sample specifically said they had used The Peace Rug. This group of 88% of the sample that used The Peace Rug is further examined. Thirty-seven percent of the students (n=22) said that they "used it for several [or more] years." Five students (8%) said that they "used it a lot" even though they did not elaborate about what "a lot" meant to them. Twenty-three students (38%) said that they "used it" which could mean a little or

a lot and were placed in this general category so that no false assumptions would be made. Three students (5%) specifically said that they “used it this year.” They could have meant that they used it in previous years as well; but they did not say that, and so no further deductions were made.

In addition to the students stating information on the extent of their use of The Peace Rug, some also indicated use of The Peace Rug in other locations. This prevalent theme was that The Peace Rug was also used frequently in different places in the school besides their classrooms such as hallways, the gymnasium, and the playground; and it was also used in their home environment. This theme will be explored more thoroughly later in this study.

Findings on Research Question One

Research Question One states: “To what extent have the students used The Peace Rug?” According to the summary of specific student responses, The Peace Rug has a high frequency of use. A summary of responses or narrative answers from students is that 88% (n=53) of the students in the sample (n=60) had used The Peace Rug. Another view of these frequencies is found in Appendix L; and complete student narratives from which this information was extracted are in Appendix M.

Discussion on the Students’ Reported Experiences with The Peace Rug that

Indicate Possible Effectiveness and Value as a Conflict Resolution Tool

Kinds of Conflict

The student responses may be found in their entirety in Appendix M, although a summary of identified themes will be discussed in this chapter. The narratives indicate that all of the incidences or problems that preceded going to The Peace Rug involved various kinds of conflicts. These problems were described as name calling, teasing, hurting feelings, eye rolling, being laughed at, anger, saying “bad” words, excluding others, telling lies, stealing, being mean, and hitting/fighting/punching/pushing. The main phrase students described that hurt them was someone saying, “You are not my friend.” In each of the narratives that told of a conflict, The Peace Rug made a difference. We will now look at prevalent themes.

Changes in Self, the Other Person, or the Problem

The most predominant theme of the student narratives was that of change. Fifty out of the 60 (83%) narratives told of a change. It was either a personal change, a change in the other person, a change in the problem, or a combination of the three. This statistic showing that 83% of the sample indicated some change taking place demonstrates that The Peace Rug is both effective and valued as a conflict resolution tool. When the changes were further scrutinized, the most common change was that of the problem itself. Thirty-four students (57%) indicated that using The Peace Rug changed the problem; thirty students (50%) indicated that the other person changed as a result of using The Peace Rug; and 27 students (45%) said that they had personally changed.

Another way of examining the data is to look at just the students who reported experiences on The Peace Rug. Out of the 60 students interviewed, 53 students said that they had used The Peace Rug. Out of those 53 students, 50 told of a change. That statistic

increases the percentage of students experiencing a change from 83% to 94%. As for the seven remaining students in the sample, six students indicated that they had seen The Peace Rug used but did not indicate in the narrative that they had a direct experience with it. It is assumed that they did not. As stated earlier, three of these seven students said that they had not used The Peace Rug but wanted to learn the process to use later.

All of the student narratives in their entirety may be found in Appendix M, but below are samples from several participants who expressed these changes in their lives as a result of The Peace Rug experience:

The Peace Rug is about having a great time when someone is fighting each other and you can just tell them to stop it and it works. I felt great when I used it. When they were bothering me, they stopped when I talked to them on The Peace Rug. It changed me a lot of times since I was in the first grade. It changed the other person by asking them some sad things that they did to me. It changed the problem ...(Student #8).

When you use The Peace Rug you say nice stuff to your friend that was bothering you and you work it out and then you be [sic] friends again. Felt good using it. It changed me to be happy. It changed the other person to be happy too. In the night my mom was getting mad and I tell her to don't hit me [sic] and if we can talk. It changed the problem... (Student #9).

...I took her to The Peace Rug and it was good, great. It changed me by learning that if you are mean to your friends then they don't want to play with you. But I don't want to do that to another student because she is my friend and I want to play with her. She gave me and another girl a hug and then she said that she would be friends and never say mean things to me again. Another girl said that she was my friend and she would never be mean to me and if I get lost she would try to go find me. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug (Student #11).

When I was in first grade, this kid was punching me and teasing me so the teacher told me I should go to The Peace Rug. [After using it] I felt proud of myself. It changed me...it changed the other person. They push their buddy around and call names [sic] and sometimes they would get suspended and now they don't. It changed the problem by using it (Student #15).

I felt great [when I used The Peace Rug]. It has changed me and the other person. We make friends [sic] and when we fight we go together. It changed the problem (Student #39).

Changes of Mood

This next prevalent theme was that of the students saying that they had a change of mood after using The Peace Rug. A general consensus was that their feelings were sad prior to using The Peace Rug and happy afterward. Out of the sample of 60 students, 32 students (53%) indicated in their open-ended responses that they felt good or happy about their experience. Again, another way of analyzing this data is to look at the 53 students who actually used The Peace Rug. Out of these 53 students, the 32 students who described these positive experiences would be 60% of that number.

In each case, a conflict preceded their experience on The Peace Rug. Due to this change, it would demonstrate again that The Peace Rug was effective and of value as a conflict resolution tool. These students share their experiences in their own words:

Everybody on the bus said that I was the one that was talking loud on the bus and stuff and saying bad words and stuff but I wasn't. I shared my feelings about what they said. I felt good. It changed me by being friends with them. It changed the problem by telling them to stop (Student #4).

When I used it, it felt good. And I helped the other person do the right thing. It changed the other person by talking it out with them. Talking about it changed the problem. There was a girl in class who said she wished that I was never [sic] born. I told her that we needed to go to The Peace Rug....when you do this it makes me feel like this (Student #12).

It was a good thing. It helped me. I felt happy. It changed me to not fight anymore and be friends. It changed [the others]...they stopped doing bad things. It changed the problem (Student #13).

I used it last year and this year and when I was in kindergarten. [I felt] Good. It made my heart happy. It changed both [of us] and we hugged each other. We got

to be friends. At home, when me [sic] and my sister fight, I use it. Every time she hits me I use it. She doesn't know how to do it so I am teaching her (Student #50).

... If I was the person who did something to them I would feel bad but I would still feel happy that I went to The Peace Rug to apologize to them and I felt like a good friend and it made me feel really good. I am very good but if I did something bad or got angry I would get on The Peace Rug and the kids would tell me what I did to them. I would start to feel how they felt and see how I would feel if they did it to me. So I see how I should treat people like I want to be treated. The other person, if they had done something to me, I am sure that if they saw how I felt they can see how it would hurt to be treated like that so that they will treat other people better. If me [sic] and the other person had problems like calling names or fighting we talked about it and noticed that we were hurting each other and that as we talked it worked out and the problem started to go away [sic]. I think The Peace Rug is a great thing and I think if it wasn't here there would be a whole lot of bad. There wouldn't be a way to make problems go away (Student #16).

Students Are Friends Again

Twenty-six students (43%) said the words "we are friends again," or something similar. The word "friend" or the concept of "friends again" was not used by the researcher in the interview questions, which adds even more richness to the narrative responses indicating this theme of relationships was identified by the students themselves. They discovered The Peace Rug to be an effective and compelling way to renew friendships. Student samples follow below, describing the connecting and reconnecting of relationships:

It was easy and it helped me to be friends with the others. I felt good when I was using it. It changed me by being friends with others and being peaceful and not fighting. I think it changed the other person by talking and giving kind words. It helped with the problem (Student #14).

[I] Have seen it change the people who go...It helps people be friends again. I feel fine [when I use The Peace Rug]. It changed me ...it made it so they didn't do it again (Student #17).

Well, my friend said they were calling me names and I just sat down and talked to them about it and we became friends again. At first I was sad then after we finished I was happy. I got more friends and I became friends with everybody. It kind of changed them. They became nicer. Well, the problem hasn't happened anymore so I am happy about that. I did it at my house once for my mom and dad and me and my brother. Me [sic] and another girl got into an argument and I asked her if she wanted to go to The Peace Rug and she said 'yes' and we went and worked it out and now we're friends again (Student #19).

One day at recess they were saying bad words in English. [So I used The Peace Rug outside]. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. When we went to recess they asked me to play tag with them. We're friends [now]. It changed the problem. At recess in first grade, my friend was stealing and said that he was not my friend anymore. I went to The Peace Rug with him and he became my friend again (Student #58).

Students Share Their Feelings

Twenty students (33%) made references to feeling words they used on The Peace Rug when using the process. They primarily had feelings of hurt or sadness and were able to express themselves using the specific instructed dialogue. Some examples of this theme have already appeared intertwined in other selected narratives, but a few other examples are:

The Peace Rug is when you sit down and you talk to somebody and you share your feelings and you make up with each other. I felt shy at first and nervous. It has changed me to be a nicer person. It changed the other person: they are being nice to me. Now it's better. I also use the Peace Rug outside at recess (Student #5).

One day I did it two times. The first time, me and a couple of other girls were at the library [in a triangle] and then they said they did not want to be my friend because I did not pick them. I felt sad. I hugged them. I felt good, happy, stronger. They said sorry and then we were friends again. The other time I used The Peace Rug, another girl said she did not want to be my friend and didn't want to play with me outside. She started crying because she was glad that she was my friend (Student #10).

When you feel bad [one uses The Peace Rug]....sad. It changed the problem. It helped make things better. I should take other kids to The Peace Rug. I feel better [when I use it] (Student #22).

When I first went to The Peace Rug I wasn't sure if I was going to know how to use it 'cause that day I had a lot of things to do and a lot going on. I felt sort of sleepy and not so good too, so I didn't think I was going to figure it out. After I went to The Peace Rug I felt a lot better and went and played again. When I was going to it I was thinking 'what if it doesn't work' but afterward I felt better because everything was over with and was okay. It sort of changed me because at first when I went to The Peace Rug I was thinking that not everyone has feelings and all that, but after I went to it and worked everything out I realized that everyone does have feelings, even grown ups do, everybody. I know it changed one person. It changed the problem a lot. It seemed like everything was back to the way it is supposed to be. It was sort of strange at first because I was wondering what would happen if the other person didn't want to go to The Peace Rug but then after they went with me everything was back to the way it was supposed to be.... I use The Peace Rug at home on the trampoline with my cousins to work out problems (Student #24).

Knowledge of The Peace Rug Process

Another combination of 20 students (33%) made specific references to language used on The Peace Rug, demonstrating their knowledge of the process. Many other student narratives indicated that the students knew the language used on The Peace Rug, but they did not mention those particular words in the interview. A few of these examples are as follows:

When you first go on The Peace Rug you have to tell them how you feel and ask them will they stop...tell them how you feel. It felt good cause you was [sic] getting all your anger and stuff out...It changed me from not fighting and hitting other people so when they start doing other stuff to make me mad... It worked (Student #2).

Everybody didn't do the bad thing again. It changed the problem. Two kids are using it, and two other kids were using it because they were not doing their job and they were fighting. So they had to go talk about it. [If someone hurt her feelings, she would say] 'When you hurt my feelings I feel sad. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop? Then we hand shake or high five' (Student #18).

I have not used The Peace Rug but have seen it used in the classroom. [I] learned what to say if needed to use it (Student #46).

We were going from lunch to the classroom this one boy hit another boy and made him hit my leg over here. We had to go to The Peace Rug. We were friends again. I felt like I had never used it before, but I knew what to say. I felt proud of myself. It changed me. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug (Student #60).

Specifically Asked Bully To Stop

Thirteen students (22%) specifically mentioned that they asked their bullies “to stop” whatever behavior was present when they went to The Peace Rug. This was volunteered information because this concept was not in the researcher’s set of interview questions. This is also indicative of a transition out of a “victim” role for these students to stand up to their bully in this way. Standing up to one’s bully is part of the rationale of The Peace Rug as discussed in Chapter One. Some examples of how some students accomplished this are:

.... I felt happy [to go to The Peace Rug]. It changed me. I would just say when they told me they were very sorry I started to really feel different. I told them how it really hurt my feelings and how it made me mad and they said they were sorry. It changed the problem because we really did talk it out. One time after recess, when I was in second grade, this other boy kept pushing me at the water fountain so I took him to The Peace Rug and told him how it made me feel and asked him to stop and then we were friends (Student #23).

When me and my friends [sic] have a fight then I tell them that we need to go to The Peace Rug and they say ‘yes.’ Then I ask them if they could stop doing stuff to me and they say ‘yes.’ [I felt] happy. We didn’t fight anymore (Student #33).

When I got to school this girl was laughing about me and making fun of me. So first I told the teacher. Then I don’t remember what happened but I asked her to stop calling me names and laughing about me. She called me a midget and stuff. I asked her to go to The Peace Rug. Sometimes when I go to The Peace Rug, like I haven’t gone this year, but sometimes I go and I am glad that it is here (Student #38).

When this other kid was hitting me we went to The Peace Rug. When he was still hitting me it was hurting and I told him to stop but he was still doing it, so we went to The Peace Rug. It changed the problem. He stopped hitting me. When I

was in reading no one would play with me after I finished my work. [So I took them to The Peace Rug and] Some of the other kids said they were sorry (Student #44).

"It Worked!"

Another major theme was that students found The Peace Rug to be effective in addressing social disagreements. The students often used the phrases "It worked!" "Things are better!" and "The problem stopped." Eleven students (18%) said in their narratives the actual words "It worked!" or "Things are/got better." This is another indicator that The Peace Rug was found by the students to be effective and of value.

Some examples are:

We talk to the person that we fight or have problems with. [I felt] fine. It changed me; it changed them. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug. Things are better (Student #27).

I had a fight with another girl because she said I rolled my eyes at her and I didn't. At the bus stop another girl had suggested that we played tag and I looked up at the sky and she thought that I was rolling my eyes at her and I wasn't. I felt happy because there is something to do [The Peace Rug] to make it stop and make it better. Me [sic] and the other girl are best friends again. There was a girl that was telling me not to play with a certain boy and I told her that I thought she needed to go with him and talk to him on The Peace Rug. They got it worked out (Student #28).

Things worked out. Some girls were calling me names and I told them that if they wanted to go to The Peace Rug that we could stop it. It changed things. One time there was a boy that was calling me names and I took him to The Peace Rug and he said that he would stop it (Student #53).

Students Use The Peace Rug at Home

Ten students (17%) volunteered ways that they have used The Peace Rug at home. Again, information about student use at home was not a part of the interview questions but was gathered in the process of asking other springboard questions.

[I have used it] with my sisters and here. In my house because my sisters would hit me [sic]. It makes me sad because my sister says that I was doing something and I wasn't and that makes me sad. So on The Peace Rug I tell her that when she does that it makes me feel sad and I ask her to stop. She started to be nice and not tell lies. I told her when she does that I feel sad (Student #20).

It helps me take care of myself and my friends. [When I used it, I felt] Good. It changed my family. Me [sic] and my sister talk about things like we are on The Peace Rug (Student #49).

When we have a problem we go and sit on The Peace Rug. [I feel] Happy. Nice changes. Happy changes. The problem goes away. I used it a lot. I used The Peace Rug words in my neighborhood and at home (Student #54).

When I was in first grade a boy was saying bad words to me in Spanish so we went to The Peace Rug and talked and he stopped. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. It changed the problem. I have used it at home with my little sister. Sometimes she hits me in the face and scratches me (Student #57).

Students Felt Shy/Scared At First

Six students (10%) candidly indicated that they felt shy or scared when they first decided to use The Peace Rug process at school. Each one of these students additionally indicated that he or she felt fine afterwards, even great. Two examples follow:

I felt scared when I used it but I got more friends. It changed the other person by being more nicer [sic]. It changed the problem because we became friends (Student #6).

It is very special to me and I get to have fun with it and I get to talk with somebody when I have to talk something out. [I felt] kind of shy sometimes and then I got used to it. It changed me because when I wasn't feeling good I used it and when I would get in a fight with somebody I would use it. I used it a lot in second grade. They stopped being mean to me and told me they wanted to be my friend and stuff (Student #25).

"I Don't Want To Fight Anymore!"

Five students (8%) openly shared the decision they had made as a result of their experience with The Peace Rug. They "don't want to fight anymore." Asking students

about future fighting was not part of the set of interview questions by the researcher, thus the above comments from these five students came by discovery. There could have been many more students who were of this conviction but were not asked. A few excerpts shared this theme:

I was thinking about fighting and then I don't [sic] want to fight anymore. [When I used it] I felt sad. It changed both of us. [It made things] better. I got in trouble for fighting a bunch of times and the teacher said they were going to send me to the principal if I didn't stop so I stopped because of The Peace Rug (Student #31).

When me [sic] and another student were fighting we had to go to The Peace Rug and we forgave each other. There were some changes. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. The problem changed. We went outside and we said, 'let's play not fight' [sic] and we didn't fight (Student #43).

When this other kid was hitting me we went to The Peace Rug. When he was still hitting me it was hurting and I told him to stop but he was still doing it, so we went to The Peace Rug. It changed the problem. He stopped hitting me. When I was in reading no one would play with me after I finished my work. [So I took them to The Peace Rug and] Some of the other kids said they were sorry (Student #44).

Findings on Research Question Two

Research Question Two: "Have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug that indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool?" As discussed above, there was a very clear and predominant theme that using The Peace Rug changed both the participants as well as the problem. Fifty out of the 53 students who described experiences on The Peace Rug said there was a change in the problem, the other person, or changes in themselves. These positive changes were experienced at school and at many of the students' homes. A second prevalent theme was that a dramatic change of mood occurred from feeling bad about a conflict to feeling good after resolving

the conflict using The Peace Rug. Another dominant theme derived from the student narratives was that friendships were restored due to The Peace Rug process. Students repeatedly revealed that, “We are friends again!” This was one of the desired effects, that of feeling connected. Students shared their feelings of hurt and sadness freely when using the dialogue of The Peace Rug and also displayed a sound knowledge of the whole process. The victims of bullying usually initiated going to The Peace Rug. They seemed to have a very clear and strong sensitivity to disrespect and also the compelling courage to take their perpetrators to The Peace Rug. Another theme was the familiar response, “It worked!” or “Things are better!” Additionally, students used the process not only at school and but also in their homes. A further theme was that students felt shy or scared at first use, but felt good after their initial and following experiences on The Peace Rug. A last theme discovered in the student narratives was that less fighting occurred after using The Peace Rug. Students made comments such as “I don’t want to fight anymore.”

Skills that the students continued to illustrate in their narratives went beyond success in only conflict resolution skills. A summary of other skills described by students in discovery were communication skills, problem solving, empathy, compassion, respect, a change of attitude and mood, harmony in the midst of cultural diversity, forgiveness, civility, and self-respect. Therefore, the students seemed to suggest in all of these themes that The Peace Rug is both effective and valuable. They considered The Peace Rug very successful at resolving conflicts and they regard the process with high esteem. The narrative answers from students are summarized by these themes and are compiled in Appendix M and Table 1 (see Table 1).

Table 1

Research Question #2: *Have the students reported experiences with The Peace Rug that indicate possible effectiveness and value as a conflict resolution tool?*

Categories	% of Students (n=60)
Student recognized change in self, others, and/or the problem(s):	83% (n=50)
self	45% (n=27)
other person	50% (n=30)
problem	57% (n=34)
Student said “I felt good/happy”(change of mood) when using The Peace Rug	53% (n=32)
Student said they became “friends again”	43% (n=26)
Talked about sharing feelings (hurt, sadness) when using dialogue on The Peace Rug	33% (n=20)
Student made reference to specific language used on The Peace Rug (knowledge of process)	33% (n=20)
Student asked bully to stop	22% (n=13)
Student said the actual words “It worked” or “Things are better”	18% (n=11)
Student said used it at home	17% (n=10)
Student felt shy/scared at first	10% (n=6)
Less fighting now (“I don’t want to fight anymore.”)	8% (n=5)

Discussion on To What Extent Do the Teachers See Frequency of Use of The Peace Rug by Their Students

A summary of Table 3 concerning how the teachers view the frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students shows that all 26 teachers (100%) said it was used in their classrooms. Two out of the 26 respondents are paraprofessionals who indicated that they did not have their own classrooms, but they stated that students in classrooms in which they served did use The Peace Rug repeatedly. Additionally, The Peace Rug was used frequently in classrooms as well as other places on the school campus. Most of the teachers (81%) indicated that The Peace Rug was used daily or several times weekly. Another common theme was an effect from frequent classroom use: similar to the students in the study, the teachers indicated their frequent use (12%) of The Peace Rug in their homes. Lastly, all of the many first-year teachers in the sample used The Peace Rug frequently as well as the teachers who had been at this elementary school site in Northwest Georgia for several years. Many had used The Peace Rug for a duration of time, for up to four years since its invention and introduction. Appendix N also displays this information.

Findings on Research Question Three

Research Question Three: “To what extent do the teachers see frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students?” The term “teachers” includes both classroom teachers as well as teacher aides, known also as paraprofessional staff members. The paraphrased narrative responses given by teachers are compiled in Table 3 (see Table 3).

Table 2

Research Question #3: *To what extent do the teachers see frequency of use of The Peace Rug by their students?*

Categories	% of Teachers (n=26)
“used it”	100% (n=26)
“used it a lot or frequently”*	81% (n=21)
“used at home also” **	12% (n=7)
“used for multiple years”***	8% (n=5)

* More than these 21 could have used it a lot or frequently, but frequency was not indicated in the other narratives.

** Other teachers in the study could also have had students who used it at home, but these are the only ones who indicated that information in open-ended questioning.

*** 2 to 4 years

Discussion on How Teachers Describe Their Own Experiences and the Experiences of
Their Students Concerning The Peace Rug, Including Any Possible Changes That
Took Place

The narrative statements given by the teachers suggest that they felt that their own experiences and their students' experiences related to The Peace Rug were extremely effective and valuable ones. More specifically, many of the teachers described their thoughts about The Peace Rug and their personal experiences with The Peace Rug as follows: "I love it," "great idea," "wonderful idea," "a wonderful thing," "successful," "definitely works," "so simple," "very effective and useful," "profound impact," "world of difference," "wonderful technique," "great experience," "very impressed by it," "pleased with it," and "it has changed my life at home and at school."

The most dominant themes as indicated by the teachers are expressed here, in Appendix O, and in Table 4. Several of the following major themes are often interwoven with other themes in the narratives given as examples in this section. However, the narratives are categorized under the most dominant theme present.

Reference to Problem or Conflict Resolved

One hundred percent (100%) of all of the teachers (n=26) indicated that The Peace Rug handled the problems or conflicts which arose. Teachers said that they believe The Peace Rug specifically takes care of overt conflicts as well as tattling.

Teacher A: We don't have to tell them to use it; they know to use it. If we have a problem we need to go talk about it. [It's] Easy to learn. After they have talked it out, they go away peaceful [sic]. It is very successful for them. To me, the problems have always been solved. In fact, sometimes they enjoy it so much that

they just start chatting and we have to say, 'okay, let's come back to class.' It's nice to have something, a tool, because it is frustrating when the children come up and they are arguing and saying, 'this person did this and this person did this' and you know... it's so nice to say, 'do you think maybe we need to talk about it?' And then they automatically know, 'We need to go to The Peace Rug.' And it's nice to have a tool. It's not really us as teachers solving the problem, they are solving the problem. [About changes] I've noticed an eagerness to want to talk to each other and work it out. The Peace Rug has never been a punishment thing. It is more of an exciting thing. They go to it with more of a positive attitude, like we need to solve it. There is never the attitude of, 'Oh, I don't want to go.' You know, so far they've had good attitudes about it. It's teaching them to communicate with each other and solve issues in a respectful way that you go about it and the care and respect that you have for another person's feelings. I love it. I think it's a wonderful invention. I try to use it for my own two children at home. They are still learning how to do it. Again, it is showing them how to respect each other when there is a problem. I think it's wonderful. They can use it in all parts of their lives, with parents or other adults in their life. When there is an issue at hand, I like the respectful way they ask the person or they tell their feelings about something that has happened and the care they should have about the other person's feelings and what was going on. It is something we can use throughout our whole lives and they are learning that now.

Teacher P: when it is needed they never balk about going there. They always go there to resolve their problems and do what they are supposed to do. They always come back and check with me and sometimes I can debrief more than others. So we know what it is for. We know how to use it. I think it is helpful. I think the general rule is that they leave with smiles on their faces so it is a positive thing. Most of the time they are able to verbalize something and if it is a matter of one being the victim and the other being the aggressor then they are able to say that I am sorry. I usually ask for the plan and ask how they feel about each other now and they make that plan and go on. I can't remember a time when something resolved on The Peace Rug didn't get resolved. Some classes [over the years] seem to have more bickering than others, but some of the things that I have set up in my classroom like no tattling ...[but] students still come to me telling me so and so did this. So I tell them they need to work it out and go to The Peace Rug. I tell them they need to use words to solve their problem. And they do it. The Glasser system was in place before The Peace Rug was but The Peace Rug gave it a reality spot. It gave it a place and made it visible. It made it an active something that was on a higher scale than just words. The fact that it is called a Peace Rug gives it the expectation that when you work something out you are at peace.

Reference to Students Solving the Problem and Not Teacher Solving the Conflict

One hundred percent (100%) of all of the teachers (n=26) indicated that the students resolved their own conflicts and became friends. Peace replaced problems, producing smiling faces. Teachers like being able to have more time to teach and not having to be involved in or be mediator for every conflict. The students completely assumed the responsibility of trying to solve their own problems instead of the teacher.

Teacher B: The children are to the point where they just come up and say, 'We need to go to The Peace Rug.' They go and they take care of it. I sometimes hear them talking loudly to each other but they are working out their issues. They learned the procedures...they've been trained. The guidance counselor provides little sticks with what they need to say to each other. I think it has been good. I think they enjoy it. I think that sometimes it can be a fun way or a game way to work things out. But I think they have positive experiences. It has given me the power to say, 'You need to go work that out on The Peace Rug.' I don't have to be the moderator. They have to work it out themselves and that is the way life is. You have to work things out yourselves. Overall, as a class, the number of incidences of conflict is down. But now the same children seem to need it continuously. That probably has to deal with their own issues. There is less tattling. They will just come up and say, "We need to go to The Peace Rug," so there is less tattling. It's made it easier for me to not have to spend that time working that out for them when they can go do it. I think that they feel comfortable that they have a place to go. I would say more than anything, it makes sense, doesn't it? Starting The Peace Rug with children and working things out, that's what we have to do as adults. It's teaching them about life at an early age and giving them the skills they need. It's a great idea, successful. It's life skills.

Teacher D: So, whenever The Peace Rug was needed in the first couple of months, I would go and do it with them. But now because they see how it is supposed to be done, they are able to do it on their own. This is something they don't see a lot of at home or in the neighborhood or anywhere. It is something that has to be taught. It is easy to learn but there are first some things that have to be unlearned about how people deal with conflict. It's easy but it takes a while to do it. They usually don't leave it [The Peace Rug] until they have resolved the conflict. They sometimes sit there and not talk for a while so I have to try and get them going. But, I don't know of a time they have not come away without working it out. It helps me as a teacher to be able to teach instead of having to

deal ...having to take two children aside to resolve conflicts and taking away time that I need for teaching and working with the whole class on something. It gives me more time to be with my class as a whole instead of putting them on hold. I think the change is the way they have learned to work it out..... I think what is important is that they have learned how to work conflicts out. There is a lot less use of a physical approach to how they are supposed to work things out solving a conflict and much more talking like first graders being able to take [the] initiative to confront each other and to talk about what hurt them or how they feel left out. I feel like it's a good way and a simple way and a positive way to help students start learning at an early age how they should work out conflicts with other people. Especially when they are playing with other students from this school they can be a model for other students who aren't from this school. They can use it in everyday situations.

Teacher I: We use The Peace Rug process in different situations. The children are learning to talk. I really think they are learning to talk about things....It is just so amazing to see two kids just so upset and you send them to talk about it and they come back and they are both smiling. They've worked it out. Most of the time I will say, 'Do I need to get into this?' and they will say no. Everybody usually ends up happy. They learned the words to use at The Peace Rug and we work with them on that. I don't have to direct them when they get there and I don't have to pay attention to what they are saying because they know what to do. They have learned enough [sic] what to do to get the dialogue going. It doesn't take them long either. A few minutes later they have worked it out. It is an idea that they don't see too often, something that they can use to get their point across, that they don't see a lot of at home or whatever.It is so simple and yet it can have such an impact that they can just sit down and talk about it.

Teacher L: My son was at a different school and came home talking about a problem with a friend. I asked him what he did about it. He said that they went to The Peace Rug. I was so surprised that they had a Peace Rug at his school because we have had it here and I knew all about it. And he could tell me all of the steps to do at The Peace Rug and how to work it out. They always end with a handshake or a high five. I think that he liked having The Peace Rug because he could be in charge of fixing his behavior and he could go over there and work it out without the teacher having to mediate it. After that we could talk to him about The Peace Rug, what he needed, and how we could use them at home. I have used it here at school but since he had heard about it somewhere else we could now use it and talk about it and help us solve conflicts at home. The parents and students: it gives them power to solve their own problems. Given that responsibility they really step up to the plate to solve problems on their own rather than someone else trying to solve them. It gives the students power to solve their problems that they didn't have before and then with the model, they know what to do when they get there and then they know when it's finished. They know what to do and how to resolve their problem and then go on with their day. This way it

doesn't go on and on. Without The Peace Rug you don't resolve it and so it goes on and on throughout the day and causes little problems all day. With this tool, they can move on and get back to what they need to do. I think now that they know how to use it here, they can take that communication skill home with them even though they don't have a rug at their house. They can still work out their problems using the techniques they have learned here.

Reference to The Peace Rug® As Being a Positive Experience

One hundred percent (100%) of all of the teachers (n=26) indicated that use of The Peace Rug was a very positive experience. Teachers expressed a change in their classrooms' climate and revealed that the students have become more helpful, cooperative, and encouraging with each other since the use of The Peace Rug; and are going out of their way to be friends. Some of the teachers stated that it was a very positive experience in the following ways:

Teacher C: ...What I have learned is that the wording of the procedures communicates a general idea of 'let's talk' or 'this is not acceptable' and 'how can we apologize and think about not doing that again.' Or, 'What's a better way to do that?' It's a positive experience because they are not brushed off. They get a chance to listen and so they'll sit and stare at each other and maybe start grinning; or if they've been really hurt, then I'll say, 'Let's hear what happened.' Well 'he told me so and so...so I hit him.' Well, they will get heard and that is what is important. It is just so nice to say, 'Go to The Peace Rug.' And we don't hesitate, and if there is a problem, we send them to The Peace Rug. It probably does reduce the number of incidences. Children know there is a mechanism. They may need to be reminded of it. And it's useful to have them sit at The Peace Rug for a variety of complaints. I would say that it's a cure all. I have good feelings [associated with its use].

Teacher N: It has been used in lots of classrooms that I have been in [as a classroom paraprofessional]. And it has been very effective. The kids go to The Peace Rug and they generally talk about what made them mad and they usually solve the problem within two or three minutes and then they go back and sit down and start doing their work again. It is an effective way to nip the problem in the bud. Very easy to learn. I think it was a very positive experience. It taught them that hitting, kicking, and biting are not acceptable and that you can resolve things using words and quickly and effectively just by talking out the situation. I thought it was very effective. When I did use it, it was very effective and useful. It kind of

teaches the kids a moral lesson and how to deal with problems. It teaches them how to deal with things on a social level. And I think that is a very important part of education in general. It really does teach them how to resolve conflict and it is problem solving and the kids learn from it. It's problem solving. It's teaching you how to deal with real life situations in general and how to work through things in a peaceful manner and not overreact and pitch a fit or throw a tantrum. It is teaching them day to day what they are going to go through and the best way to approach the situation.

Reference to The Peace Rug Experience As Teaching a Life Skill (conflict resolution, communication, responsibility, respect, empathy and compassion, self-control)

One hundred percent (100%) of the teachers (n=26) indicated that The Peace Rug taught life skills. A very strong theme was that The Peace Rug taught personal responsibility; taught the students to talk things out and to express themselves instead of fighting; and it taught diplomacy, empathy, and respect for others. Teachers reported that The Peace Rug taught students to communicate well with other students and also adults, as well as teaching them to learn to listen. As a result of using The Peace Rug, students learned problem-solving skills to use for the rest of their lives. Teachers said these life skills can be used with family, friends, children, or adults, both at school and in their homes.

Teacher E: ... I think it definitely works and they seem to make peace with each other.... They are seeing there is a way to work a situation out. Hopefully they will apply this in their own lives.... I definitely think there is a difference because they are both leaving satisfied without feeling punished. I think it is a very timely thing...that when I first heard about it, I was surprised how well the children took to it and how well they understood. And you explained that some of them already knew, that's just how we solve conflict in our classes. I am amazed how well it works at their age. I am impressed that it's teaching them skills to solve problems. Perhaps there were children years ago that we didn't address that felt like their conflict wasn't resolved and they carried that with them even into their adult or teenage years. I think it makes the child feel important that they do get to deal with it. It also teaches the person who started the conflict to take responsibility and be more sensitive. I am very impressed by it. I believe you have taught them

not to be aggressive but not be afraid to speak out in the correct way that they can even share with their moms and dads and other family members the best way they have learned to resolve conflict. If they can't change them maybe they can change the next generation.

Teacher F: ...A lot of times they are kind of shy about it and they don't want to go and talk about their problems. I think it's good. The times I have seen it used it has resolved the conflict without me getting involved and that is what it is about. I think it's good.... I have seen changes in them taking more responsibility to resolve the conflict instead of making it a fight. Just talk it out. The climate is less angry. I think the kids like the process and knowing they are empowered. To know that they will be listened to is empowering. For a weaker student, it is an empowering thing that the other people have to listen to them. I am always at a distance making sure that they are working it out. I have worked in inner city schools and worked with upper middle class types [of] students and I think it is the best thing I have seen so far for working out conflicts. I think it teaches them to talk out problems, without fighting first. It teaches communication skills.

Teacher J: I use it just for confrontations in the classroom or any problems that my children need to get out or anytime they need to talk to a friend or clear the air with. I believe they are very familiar with it because they have used it in kindergarten and in first grade. I think the visuals that you gave them really helped them a lot. It [student's experience] was definitely positive. They would like to tell me how they worked their problems out and what they did and all that so it was very positive. Well, student teaching and other experiences, we really never were taught to be able to deal with the problems. I like that the students are taught to communicate their problems with each other and work things out for themselves. They used to do a lot of tattling but now they just go and take care of it themselves. They know what to do so they don't have to come to me to settle a problem. I think everybody is more of a community and it feels more like a family now. Everyone feels very close. Pretty much it doesn't even have to be for conflicts. I have some kids who are having problems like a father is in jail or something and they want to talk to a friend about it they go to the rug and talk about things. It is a good place for them to go to talk about their problems and it helps teach the other kids about empathy and I have been teaching them about it. I am really pleased with it. When I first came here I was like, Peace Rug, what is it? But I really like having it in the classroom. They [students] will be better off as grown ups and adults being able to work out their problems instead of fighting and arguing so they will have the knowledge to work things out in a good way.

Teacher O: I think it is a wonderful technique and a wonderful use of material. I think it gives the children something concrete to begin their thought process. I think it helps children and adults to have a place for thinking and working things out. I think that is one of the wonderful things about young students is that they learn procedures easily and they want structure in their lives. I don't remember

particular situations that would have precipitated me needing to go to The Peace Rug but it was always interesting to me how they would explain to someone else that they needed to go to The Peace Rug and work things out. We never really needed to tell them to go. I loved it. That is what thrilled me is when they started to assume that responsibility. I think it brought about changes. It was a game at first in that they wanted to go to The Peace Rug so we would create situations. As we used it more and I became more adept at using the proper terminology we learned that it could be a healing thing and not just a game. It was a way to get themselves under control. It was sort of a step forward for the children later on to go to somebody and just find a place and not need the rug anymore which is what it was supposed to do. It helped me learn language to help children talk through situations and with my own children. It works beautifully. I think having something like this in an area being used by a lot of people sends a message that this is a place for peace and a place for respect for each other and respect for self and that this is the kind of behavior, interaction, and environment that this place is. I like to think that it is a calming influence that it is just in the room. I think it has a visual impact on people.It gives you a peaceful feeling.

Teacher Q: The students learned the procedures. Some children use it more than others. Some feel the need to express themselves more than others. The ones that do use it seems like it benefits them by getting their feelings out and discuss the problem and letting them come to a decision and get on by being friends. It gives them a happier time in their day. I think by the end of the year they understood each other better and were able to get along better. They knew that they had to change their behavior and enjoy each other's company more. Children realize now that they don't need a mediator. They can solve the problems on their own in a few minutes so I don't have to do much mediating anymore. I hope they can see that they don't need the actual rug in their home to use these same things at their house with their friends and family. Maybe it will help them understand other people's feelings. It could change their attitudes with everybody and help them understand how to get along with everybody better.

Teacher W: They do know the procedures and how to go about starting it and all that and follow the procedures. I think it was a great experience for them. One girl told me they had talked to their little brother or sister on The Peace Rug, which they don't have, but using something else. So it must be a great experience for them to be using it at home. It has changed a lot for me. When I first started teaching I probably raised my voice more and told them what to do instead of letting them work things out for themselves. So I think that I changed a lot because of it. I have even used it because I will take them over there and tell them that I don't like what they are doing and I would like them to stop and would they please stop and they will just sit there and listen and say yes. I just think it has changed the climate because of the way you handle problems in the classroom. They get along and that has a good bit to do with it but all children can't get along all the time so they do know it's there so that has changed their perception of how

to get along better with others.It is a great place for them to go and quietly work things out. It gives you a peaceful classroom.There is just so much in the children's lives and in the world so I think it is a really good way for them to find out there is a better way to solve their problems other than just hitting. I think it is great and I will continue to use it. And I think the children have already applied it, like I said, about the little girl who took it home. If they are using it at home, that is an actual situation. In a few years when they are older, that will be something they can use their whole lives.

Reference That Students Knew How To Use

Seventy-three percent (73%) of the teachers (n= 19) made reference to their students knowing how to use The Peace Rug on many different levels.

Teacher G: I have had students who have come to me and said we need to meet on The Peace Rug. It is in a corner of the room where people can meet and other things can still be going on. So I try not to butt in unless it goes really long then I will because I don't want them to miss anything. But the students will go back and use the techniques you have taught them. They didn't really need my help. I think it worked. It helped them to really verbalize what the problem was. When one could come out and tell the other what the problem was then they could work it out. So I think it has helped. It helps them get along better. It helps them see each other's point of view better. [About some of the kinds of changes] More tolerance. Not such short tempers.... My perception of it is that it should be something they initiate. I have mostly let the students say that they needed to go. I think it is wonderful to get things out in the open. When the children start verbalizing their feelings, it gets resolved quicker. I hope they will [apply this] at home and all throughout the rest of their schooling. I hope they will carry it into their work place. I don't know if they can but I hope they can use those skills their whole lives.

Teacher S: It is nice because it helps them [students] learn to take responsibility for their problems instead of having someone else take responsibility for them. Now they are in the habit of - when they have a problem - they will tap someone on the shoulder and ask them to go to The Peace Rug with them and talk about the problem. Or if you hurt my feelings they know they needed to go to The Peace Rug and when they get up they know to shake hands or give each other a hug or something like that. The students learned the procedures quickly. They liked it because it made them feel grown up and more responsible. And we even had someone who knew they [sic] had hurt someone's feelings so they asked the other person to go to The Peace Rug and apologize for hurting their feelings. I tell them to think about what they need to do and then go take care of it. So they call them over and go and work it out. We didn't have a Peace Rug in my house but I told

my children they had to be responsible for their acts when they had done something good or bad because it isn't mommy's job to take care of their problems. It is their job to fix their mistakes. So we didn't have the actual rug but we had a similar structure at home. It changed them in the classroom in that they didn't want to go to The Peace Rug because at first they knew they had done something wrong but when they got it and understood what it was for, they would go there and be very responsible and take the initiative on their own. They will raise their hand and say they need to go to The Peace Rug. So they have the initiative to get out there and fix their problems. I think it is a positive thing because it makes them take responsibility. I think it really does help them build their character and teaches them what they need to do and what not to do and how to respond to other children in the classroom. They do it at home. They talk about how they use it at home and how they don't have an actual rug but they use the conversations. They bring their parents to the classroom and show them the rug and tell them that they work out their problems there and they want to do that at home.

Reference to Use of The Peace Rug At/In Home of Student or Teacher

The teachers were varied in their approaches and adaptations, but many expressed changes in their lives, even in their own homes, as a result of using The Peace Rug. Fifty percent (50%) of the teacher sample (n=13) made reference to home use.

Teacher M: and I have had parents say they have used it at home. I have also used it with my kids and grandkids so there is some carryover.

Teacher R: A lot of them have older brothers and sisters involved with situations that make them uncomfortable and nervous. They may need to talk to them or their parents about it. My son is an example too. I taught him to use the conversation of The Peace Rug at home and with his brother. His dad wanted him to handle things the manly way with that kid that said he hated him, but I taught him about what we learned last year. I told him we had a better way to handle it. I can see some of these children doing it. One girl said she would like it if her parents could use it [The Peace Rug].

Teacher T:.... The children have practiced the procedure from the card that you gave me and after six weeks or so they know the format themselves so if they have a conflict they know how to work things out for themselves. I think it has been just great. I think it is really going to help them grow as individuals and eventually they will bring it into their own home. I have just used the procedures in my own life so it has helped put things into perspective so I think that using the procedure for The Peace Rug has helped me in life. I have seen a reduction of

incidences of conflict in my classroom because right when there is a conflict they will try to work it out and talk it out but if they can't talk it out then they come to me and I tell them to go over to the rug and work it out. I hardly ever have to intervene anymore because they know what they have to do. [Have been using it] Ever since you came up with it. I just really think handling things in the way that The Peace Rug teaches you to handle it really seems to help the children put things into perspective and in order of the different stages to work out their conflicts better. I have always thought it was a wonderful idea. I have used it every year and at the beginning of the year we go over the procedures so that they will know how to use it. We do that for the first six weeks of class so after that they know what to do on their own. I think it is important that it becomes a part of our routine.

Teacher U: I even use it with my own child and he will tell me we need to go to The Peace Rug. I think that all children see it as a place where they can go and solve problems.

Reduction of Incidences of Conflict

Twenty-three percent (23%) of all of the teachers (n=6) made specific references to the reduction of incidences of conflict as a result of using The Peace Rug. Narratives also suggest that The Peace Rug not only reduces the incidences of conflicts but prevents classroom interruptions.

Teacher H:a couple of girls had a problem and they started to come to me and then they realized that they could go to The Peace Rug. One was holding the other's hand and they went and sat down on The Peace Rug and they must have solved it because they came back to me and told me they had solved it and they were friends again. So, we use it more on the playground....They have the power to solve the problem themselves. I think to them it is really freeing when they come and that they are excited that they fixed it and that they are friends. I would say it is a very good strategy for conflict management. I wish I would have [sic] had one when I taught the older kids, especially fourth and fifth grades. That would have been helpful to teach them. Even at {another} school, they didn't have the skills to know how to solve their problems. [About change in the number of incidences of conflict] The number has gone down. I still have a few that still have issues going on. But for the most part...it has gone down. I don't have nearly as many girls coming up to me saying they are having problems with other girls saying they don't want to be friends. I would say that it has gone down eighty to ninety percent. They are definitely more helpful and cooperative with each other. They are more encouraging with each other. They go out of their way

to be friends with each other now and to help each other. I think it is good that we started this young especially with these types of kids who obviously aren't getting the social skills at home. These are the high risk kids and to start conflict management this early could eventually keep them out of gangs and keeping them off the streets so it could have a good long term effect. I can use it in my house. There are several people in my family I can take to The Peace Rug. I've heard them use the same terminology talking about how they took their brother aside or something like that at home and talked things out using The Peace Rug process, even though they don't have the actual rug.

Teacher K:The students learned the procedures and they were easy to learn. I think, to me, the biggest part that helps the children is that they learn to communicate about what the problem is. A lot of times we tell children to go work it out but we don't give them the language to communicate with each other. So I think that is the biggest part of it. I think [what has changed for me is] the part that we need to get the children to know, so that they will automatically know what they need to do to work something out. There has been a change in the number of incidents of conflict since the children started using The Peace Rug. The children use the language even when an adult isn't present. The language part gives a common language for the teachers and students to communicate with. I just think it is a very positive thing. These are things [skills] that they can take with them. It isn't just about the rug. These are skills they can use wherever they go.

Teacher V: It has been used many times in my classroom. It has been used for all the little squabbles that kids need to learn how to work out by themselves. It is used to prevent classroom interruption. It is used as a tool to teach children how to solve their problems they need to learn to get along in the world. I can't think of a day that has gone by that I haven't told someone that it sounds like they need to use The Peace Rug. I just don't want it to become a negative thing. I like to suggest, firmly sometimes. I have never had them say no. Occasionally I have had to go over and tell them I think they are getting off track and they need to get back to what they are there for. They do get back on track and use it well. I think their initial experience is they think they can't do this; they don't want to do this; it is embarrassing, but when they get there and sit down and listen to each other, they realize how valuable it is. They learn from it and they learn that what they do affects people in more ways than they can imagine. The procedures are clear cut and simple enough for a kindergartener to learn because my daughter first told me about it when it was first used here and I didn't even know what it was. She uses it with my husband so that they can talk out their differences or problems when she has done something wrong or she has something she wants to talk to him about. She and my son sit down and use the Peace Rug and talk things out. So it has changed my life at home and it has changed my life at school. It cuts out so much tattling and interrupting the class for mundane little things and it also cuts out the hurt because they can talk it out about how much it hurts. I think that one

thing that is important to know is that once kids use The Peace Rug they want to use The Peace Rug. I don't have to ask them to go they want to go and will ask me if they can go. It amazes me that they will ask if they can go because they need to go and they know they need to go. It is great because they know they can voice their opinion and they won't be looked at negatively. There is no negative from it and that is good. It can be used in all sorts of situations both at home or here at school. Whether someone broke someone else's pencil or something serious happened, it can be used anywhere. It is a wonderful thing. There are not enough of them around.

Discussed now are other miscellaneous threads woven throughout many of the teacher narratives but not included in one of the Tables in this document. The Peace Rug was considered a safe, secure place where individuals could work out problems as well as a place to go and think or process. Moreover, it was said to give structure and a calming influence in the classrooms. Other feedback given was that the students enjoyed it, felt important and empowered when using it, and wanted to go to The Peace Rug. They were eager to initiate dialogue, eager to work things out, and found the process to be exciting. The students learned not to be afraid to speak up to someone who was bullying them. The Peace Rug gave them a common language that could be used to handle conflicts with another person. They learned to both discern and name interpersonal problems. By using The Peace Rug the children assumed ownership of their problems. They also learned self-control and anger management because The Peace Rug gave them the time and a place to "cool off." The Peace Rug brought closure to their problems so the students could get on with their day. The students did not feel as if it were a place of punishment and left The Peace Rug feeling satisfied without feeling punished. The students knew how to use The Peace Rug, it was easy to learn, and the training was simple enough for the smallest children to understand. Many teachers praised the fact that The Peace Rug took only minutes to use. Teachers felt that The Peace Rug was an effective and a simple way to

help students at an early age to learn how to work out conflicts with each other. Several teachers expressed their surprise at how well the students adapted to The Peace Rug process and how well they understood it. Teachers even noted that their students used The Peace Rug as a private connecting place for sharing their concerns and other personal issues with their friends for support. Several teachers also believed that Roan was a more peaceful school than other schools. Many mentioned that The Peace Rug prevented their students' behaviors from escalating into physical aggression. Also, there was frequent mention of the contrast between The Peace Rug and the inappropriate conflict resolution that is modeled in many of their homes.

Findings on Research Question Four

Research Question Four: "How do the teachers describe their own experiences and the experiences of their students concerning The Peace Rug, including any possible changes that took place?" The narrative and direct responses from teachers are compiled in Appendix O and are summarized in Table 3 (see Table 3).

Summary of Findings

In conclusion, this chapter presented the findings of the analysis of data from narratives by 60 students and 26 teachers in regard to each of the four research questions. The summary of the findings is that use of The Peace Rug is both extremely effective and has great value in resolving conflicts. Its effectiveness, or competency to accomplish the desired effect or purpose, was described as such in most of the student and teacher narratives. The value of The Peace Rug for both student and teacher samples is reflected in its usefulness, regard, and importance to them.

Table 3

Research Question #4: *How do the teachers describe their own experiences and the experiences of their students concerning The Peace Rug, including any possible changes that took place?*

Categories	% of Teachers (n=26)
Reference to problem or conflict resolved	100% (n=26)
Reference to students solving the problem and not teacher solving the conflict	100% (n=26)
Reference to The Peace Rug as being a positive experience	100% (n=26)
Reference to The Peace Rug experience as teaching a life skill (conflict resolution, communication, responsibility, respect, empathy and compassion, self-control)	100% (n=26)
Reference that students knew how to use*	73% (n=19)
Reference to use of The Peace Rug at/in home of student or teacher	50% (n=13)
Reduction of incidences of conflict**	23% (n=6)

* This was implied in every narrative but specifically stated in these.

** This was implied in many other narratives, but specifically stated in these.

The extent or frequency the students used The Peace Rug was primarily that of using it more than once and using it over several years. Another consistent finding concerning extent is that it was used in different places within the school besides their classroom and was also used in the home environment. The students' experiences on The Peace Rug were varied; but some common themes were that of learning to speak up to one's bully, become friends, and most of all change the students as well as the problems. Student #16 described his experience and the experience of many of fellow students by saying, "I think The Peace Rug is a great thing and I think if it wasn't here there would be a whole lot of bad. There wouldn't be a way to make problems go away."

The teachers' extent of use of The Peace Rug was varied as well; but common to all 26 respondents was its frequent use in their classrooms, in other parts of the school, and in their homes as well as the students' homes. Most of the teachers indicated that The Peace Rug was used daily or several times weekly.

Concerning experiences, students told of dramatic changes in themselves, other students, and the problem itself. There was a change of mood from being disturbed about the problem to one of happiness. They were friends again and were able to share their feelings with each other. Students said they knew what to say, and were learning to confront their bullies and ask them to stop. Many said, "It worked!" or "Things are better." Numerous students began using The Peace Rug at home. Even though some were initially shy about using it, they are confident now. There is less fighting and less of a desire to fight.

All 26 teachers said that their experiences with The Peace Rug addressed and solved problems and conflicts in the classroom. All teachers indicated that the students

were resolving the conflicts and not the teachers. Moreover, it was described as a positive experience, meeting the need for students to assume the responsibility for resolving and eliminating their conflicts in a simple and easy way. Other positive changes included the teachers' noticing that students were becoming better friends, feeling more empowered, learning new language skills, improving the general climate of the classroom, reducing incidences of conflict, and providing a safe place for connections and courage to take place in school and at home.

A strong conclusion is that both students and teachers in this study indicated that The Peace Rug is both effective and of value as a conflict resolution tool. Much additional data was discovered and gathered, but its true legacy is its continued use in the lives of these children and adults over time. Every day since the data was gathered and analyzed the researcher has been told countless stories of phenomenal life changes as a result of using The Peace Rug. Conflicts abound in the world outside this school; but inside this school, there is a place where conflicts are handled routinely and powerfully, one at a time.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study sought to explore the effectiveness, value, and other effects of a new conflict resolution curriculum called The Peace Rug in addressing the problem of school violence in any form. Educators feel defeated concerning aggressive student behaviors (Schlozman, 2002). Parents worry about their children's physical and emotional safety at school (Maudlin, 2002). Children are repeating patterns of violence seen and experienced in society (Maudlin, 2002; Wessler, 2001). There also seems to be a relationship between bullies and their being disconnected from family and friends and also their inability to resolve conflicts (Glasser, 1999; Olweus, 1993; Peretti, 2001). Children need to learn how to appropriately connect with others and "find their voice" when bullied and victimized to prevent them from someday retaliating with a form of violence themselves.

This curriculum is designed for a victim of either non-physical or physical bullying. Such victims are taught to ask their bully to come to The Peace Rug in the classroom. There the student or adult participants engage in a special dialogue leading to agreements, reconciliation, and better communication. The Review of Literature suggested some factors that contribute to school violence. For example, when children feel disconnected from family and friends and are not able to find one's voice when bullied by others, they could demonstrate violent behavior. In response, The Peace Rug

was designed to better connect students and teachers, as well as to provide both a place and scripted words to use in order to find one's voice in the presence of any intimidation.

The heterogeneous sample for this qualitative study consisted of 60 students and 26 teachers from an elementary school in Northwest Georgia. The study utilized purposive sampling in order to obtain taped interviews of both students and teachers to better determine their experiences with The Peace Rug. Open-ended questions were used to solicit as much depth and detail as possible in subject responses. Those who entered the study consented to do so. An initial lesson about how to use The Peace Rug was taught in each of 32 classrooms in the fall of 2002. In January of 2003, informed consent letters about this study were given to the students and teachers at the school. The researcher conducted the student and teacher semi-structured interviews as time permitted in February and March of 2003.

Conclusions

Is The Peace Rug effective and does it have value as a conflict resolution tool? The researcher considered the frequency of use of The Peace Rug by participants and the quality of their experiences to reflect upon its effectiveness and value. The following conclusions are based on the analysis of narrative data provided by the sample of students and teachers in response to the four research questions addressed in Chapter Four. The summary of the findings in discussions on each research question and in Tables 1, 2, and 3 is that use of The Peace Rug is most effective and has value in resolving conflicts. The effectiveness of this conflict resolution curriculum is marked by its frequent use, its influential power to effect change, and its positive influence upon subjects while accomplishing its intended purpose. The Peace Rug's value for both student and teacher

samples is reflected in the many descriptions of its usefulness, regard, and importance to them.

Implications For Practice

The Peace Rug curriculum was designed primarily for classroom use. However, this study has suggested that there are other implications for its use. Once the students learned the dialogue, they used it in the cafeteria, in the hallways, at recess, on the buses, and whenever and wherever they needed to use it to confront their bullies. The most common usage was found to be on the actual Peace Rug in their classrooms, but not exclusively there. Other variations included use in their homes and in their neighborhoods.

Other implications for practice may be to further explore this study and replicate it in other geographical areas. In order to provide additional data representative of other school populations, additional variables could be made in age, gender, race, ethnic background, and socioeconomic background. Since this is a qualitative study, it is obviously not measured quantitatively, but implications from the data can still be made that The Peace Rug was effective and had value as a conflict resolution tool in the studied setting. As a result of summaries of frequency of use and the descriptions of experiences of the narratives in Tables 1, 2, and 3 the implication is to encourage continuance of use at the current site as well. For other schools wishing to experiment, the research offers 86 narratives from which to evaluate whether they wish to implement this curriculum. At the very least, every student taught this Peace Rug curriculum has the opportunity for training in the life skill of conflict resolution regardless of whether they ever go to The

Peace Rug with another student. As Student #46 said, he “learned what to say if [he] needed to use it.”

One last implication for practice may be to further explore this curriculum at a middle school and a high school population. According to miscellaneous data received from teachers and administrators who have used The Peace Rug with older students, older students find The Peace Rug to be very effective. The normal intervention for older students who use physical violence with one another is that of a referral to the principal or other administrators. If there are additional incidents, referrals are then made to various other placements for discipline or punishment. However, older students have appreciated The Peace Rug for the handling of non-physical acts of violence in order to eliminate possible escalation into physical violence later. When they first have hurt feelings or anger, they have learned how to “find their voice;” ask their bully to go to The Peace Rug; and then work things out using the special dialogue and procedures. Also, older students have expressed a desire to handle their own issues with another student instead of involving a peer mediator or a teacher. These students articulated that it makes them feel shamed and inadequate for a mediator to be involved in settling their problems. Being equipped with the verbal skills from The Peace Rug process has enabled them to learn the life skills of conflict resolution, communication, respect, and responsibility to use both at school and at home. Teachers have also expressed a desire to let these older students work out their own issues with one another without their help for several reasons. The teachers state they recognize the value of the skills learned by their students’ ownership of the process, and also a teacher can continue teaching while the students handle matters using The Peace Rug. These random reports have not been organized in a

formal way, but additional practices or an official research study could validate or invalidate these emerging themes.

Implications For Research

The primary goal of this research study was to explore the possible effectiveness and value of The Peace Rug curriculum as a conflict resolution tool. The data implies that The Peace Rug is overwhelmingly effective and has high value as a conflict resolution tool for those at the site of the research study. There was a very high percentage of consistency and frequency as well as longevity of use in classrooms, other parts of the building, and in both students' and teachers' homes. The rich narratives given by both students and teachers in Chapter Four invite replication of the study by others. The common denominator in the stories was that it is a successful tool for conflict resolution. In addition, subjects offered descriptions of many other effects of its use.

This study also increases the scholarly awareness of the significance of the problem of school violence and adds to the body of research. The literature review indicates the compelling need for an effective and valuable instrument for the prevention of violence in schools and homes. Moreover, this study encourages future research studies to further explore the use of The Peace Rug as a comprehensive approach to address this problem in schools. In order to facilitate further studies, the researcher offers some suggestions and contributions to assist others.

Recommendations for Further Study

One recommendation for a future study, whether quantitative or qualitative, would be to conduct the research at a site within the first year of Peace Rug implementation. This present research was done four years after its initial use at this site.

It is a study about the longevity of The Peace Rug concepts and how well these concepts remain. The concepts remained with students for four years after they were taught. However, frequency of use is not necessarily a valid indicator of its value for the students who have used it over several years. Apparently, the students felt that the dialogue had become so natural that there were not as many new difficult situations. An unofficial observation by the researcher is that The Peace Rug was used less often this school year and even the previous year for our older students, as opposed to the first years of its use. It may be that frequency is down for them due to success. On the other hand, some of the students who were new to The Peace Rug used it even more because it provided success for them. They indicated an increase in frequency of use.

The teachers seemed to be able to define frequency of use much better than the students were able to do. Sometimes it seemed as if the students did not know how to put into words the difference between “little use” and “lots of use” without being asked more directly, which was not preferable since it sounded like a leading question. The interview questions could be revised in order to include a better way to explore frequency of use.

Another area worth measuring in future research is that of the stages of usage. There seemed to be a tendency to use The Peace Rug first for major issues. Then after the more overt and even more physical problems were addressed, the students seemed to develop more sensitivity to the subtler issues of disrespect. They were not as willing to let the “small” issues persist, which is part of the rationale of The Peace Rug curriculum.

Another recommendation would be a better presentation of the Informed Consent letter to the students by the researcher. The researcher suggests that the student sign the letter upon receipt of it and indicate his/her classroom before taking this home. If the

student cannot write his/her name, the researcher or teacher might put his/her name on it, including the teacher's name. The researcher had assumed that the parent would fill out that portion, which seldom happened. The researcher spent considerable time attempting to learn the student's identity when the informed consent forms began to be returned with only a parental signature. Many of these students have different surnames than their parents, and so it was not as efficient a procedure as it could have been.

The following are some insights about the student sample. Those interviewed were the ones who had the drive or initiative to take the Informed Consent papers home, get one of them signed, and return it to school. The sample is not necessarily indicative of usage of The Peace Rug, but instead, of an ability to be responsible with paper tasks. Additionally, some teachers shared that some of the children who most frequently used The Peace Rug were afraid to take the form home because they were certain that their parents would not want them to participate because they feared revelations of family secrets. Additionally, many in the sample were/are abused and have a hard time participating in activities that require expressing themselves, such as speaking beyond a limited level of communication. This school population endures a great deal of violence and is probably the most economically deprived in the city. Enrichment is not commonly a part of the students' lives nor is depth of language. Another issue as to why there was sparseness of language is due to the second language issues at this site and not about The Peace Rug. Many students speak very limited English and were only able to answer the interview questions on an extremely naive level. This site has a population of 92% Latino students, with Spanish as their first language. Future research studies that address a

similar population and sample could make allowance for translators at the interviews. This would likely increase the richness of the narratives.

Other information that would have been helpful to this researcher would have been that of feedback from other schools, daycare facilities, workplaces, and homes in this local area and within the United States and Canada that are using The Peace Rug. However, this information was not within the scope of this study, and was not available.

In conclusion, the raw narrative data generated in this research suggests that The Peace Rug is a very strong curriculum to assist with conflict resolution and other related issues. There is much yet to be learned about the effects and value of The Peace Rug curriculum; but in the current setting, it does appear to be accomplishing the purpose for which it was intended. Both the students and teachers indicated a high frequency of usage and indicated varied and rich experiences as a result of using The Peace Rug.

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APPENDIX A

Lesson Plans Initially Taught to the Students

APPENDIX A: LESSON PLANS INITIALLY TAUGHT TO
STUDENTS

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Date: Week of September 2, 2002 Grade Levels: PK, K, 1, 2, 3
Unit: 1

Title: **Getting Acquainted**

Purpose: Students will learn what a counselor/teacher does, some facts about this teacher/counselor, what the students can expect from this teacher/counselor and what my job is. The teacher/counselor will learn names and interests of the students.

Classroom agreements: We share what their job is and what it isn't (teachers make their own classroom agreements; counselors use those made). Students will begin to think about the kind of person they want to be this year. We will also discuss any sad feelings in leaving home and coming to school.

THEY WILL LEARN:

- 1) IT'S NOT OK TO HURT SOMEONE'S BODY, FEELINGS OR PROPERTY
- 2) TO SET LIMITS with classmates by saying, "PLEASE STOP" when a classmate is bothering them and demonstrate this skill.
- 3) To say, "Oops, I'm sorry" when they accidentally hurt someone and
- 4) "Maybe later" if they don't want to play with someone.

From the book Balloons, the students will learn (1) that it was wrong for boys in his neighborhood to hurt his feelings; (2) that we need to share our hurts with someone who cares; (3) we can let go of those hurts; (4) we are all different shapes and colors like balloons; and (5) it's what's inside that makes us special.

Materials:

Book: Balloons by Dr. John Calvin Alberty

Procedure:

1. Greet students and ask if we could talk about some ways for us to feel like a family and to get along well this school year.
2. Make some rounds introducing everyone or asking them to introduce themselves. You might ask them to share favorite colors and favorite foods as they do this! [Other "go-rounds" like this are fun for class meetings throughout the year.]

3. Explain the main ways you will be helping the students this year: what you will do and what you will not do; what your job is and what it is not. [Examples: "I will teach and explain the class work to you as often as you need it but I will not do your job or work for you. I will try to be here on time. I will speak to you in a respectful way. I will go at a pace you can learn best, but I cannot make you learn – you will have to choose it. I will care." ETC!]

4. Explain concept that families (like classrooms) do have to have rules to get along better so that's why we have rules at school. Say:

"Let's think about what we want to happen in our classroom this year and what we DON'T want. I will write [or draw if students haven't learned to read yet] what you tell me on this board/easel."

Note: A suggestion would be to draw a line down the middle of the board/easel for what they want and what they don't want. Then you begin to facilitate their discussion, and soon you will have their room rules. You will discover that the students want what you want, but it came out of their mouths!

5. Review what their classroom agreements or rules are for that classroom. Go over the new rules several times as is age appropriate. Help them to remember their rules by making drawings or hand-signals of the rules or even making up something like a rap or song using your room's rules! Ask for signatures or thumbprints or a show of hands if they are willing to follow these agreements [the hook!].

6. **TEACH THEM TO SAY, "Please Stop"** if another classmate "bothers" them. Act out a number of skits using this tool.

7. Teach them: **"IT'S NOT OK** [shake head and finger "no"] **TO HURT SOMEONE'S BODY** [hit arm], **FEELINGS** [hand over heart], **OR PROPERTY** [pretend to break pencil or crayon]."

- Demonstrate this skill with some skits by going over examples of each
 - *hurting bodies
 - *hurting feelings (Ex.: "I am not your friend," teasing, making faces, calling names")
 - *and hurting property

- Teach, **"Oops, I'm sorry"** when they accidentally bump into or hurt and **"maybe later"** if they don't want to play with someone (instead of saying, "No, you are not my friend."), **"please,"** and **"thank you."**

8. Read Balloons (or other suitable book of your choosing):

After reading the story, adapt comments to the grade level about the following:

- (1) that it was wrong for boys in his neighborhood to hurt his feelings
- (2) that we need to share our hurts with someone who cares (like parents or teacher or counselor and explain how teacher can refer them to counselor).

- (3) we can let go of those hurts
- (4) we are all different sizes and colors like balloons, and
- (5) it's what's inside that makes us special.

We want to fly high this year!

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Date: Week of September 16, 2002

Grade Levels: PK, K, 1, 2, 3

Unit: 2

Title: **SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT: FRIENDSHIP, FIGHTING, AND THE PEACE RUG®**

Purpose:

Students will learn ways to be better friends and to treat others with **respect**. They will learn how to respond to someone hurting their feelings, their bodies, and their property.

The concept of The Peace Rug® will be introduced and explained. The Peace Rug® information will teach students:

- * How to get along better
- * How to handle their anger
- * How to respectfully share their problem with others
- * How to speak up for themselves

They will also learn about normal conflict and how that is different from bully-victim violence. They will review what to say in everyday conflict (“please stop”), what to say when bullied (say “stop” and walk away), and what to say when they come to The Peace Rug®. Then they will practice by using role-plays, asking each other to come to The Peace Rug®.

Materials: The Peace Rug®

Procedure:

1. The counselor or teacher will first ask if the students are feeling more like family. Then ask how they are coming along with their room rules. Ask, “Have you been saying “Please stop” when someone bothers you?”
2. Ask students to hold up **three** fingers. Review three ways that we hurt each other:
 - a) our bodies [hit arm]
 - b) our feelings [cover heart with hands]
 - c) our property [pretend to break pencil]
3. Have them repeat with me (while shaking head “no” and wagging index finger): **“It’s NOT OK to hurt someone’s bodies (hit arm), feelings (hand over heart), or property (pretend to break pencil).”**
4. Ask, **“What if you say, “Please stop” to someone who is bothering you and the person won’t stop” (I’m going to teach you what to do next...)**

5. Define “bully”: someone who keeps on hurting your body, feelings, or property even after you say stop.

6. Ask, “How many of you would you like a special place in your classroom where you can take a bully and work things out and become better friends? Well, I have a special place for you and it’s called The Peace Rug®.”

7. Say, “I want you to learn to speak up whenever anyone tries to be mean to you for the rest of your life as well as now. This is practice. Every day from now on in your classroom you can take someone to The Peace Rug® if you are having a problem with someone. I (the teacher or counselor) may ask you and another student to work things out on The Peace Rug® but most of the time you (students) will take each other. This way I (the teacher or counselor) can keep on teaching while you work things out.”

8. Teach steps of The Peace Rug® for conflicts in the classroom.

The Dialogue – when you want to ask someone to come to The Peace Rug®, you say:

1. I want us to be friends.
2. But we have a problem.
3. Would you please come with me to The Peace Rug®?

Then after you are sitting on The Peace Rug®, you say:

4. When you... (name what happened)
5. I feel... (sad, mad, scared, etc.)
6. I would like you to ... (stop, ask me first, etc.)
7. Will you stop? (wait for response)

Then after agreements are made, there is celebration – with high fives, handshakes, or hugs.

DEMONSTRATE ACTIVITY with myself and students doing role-plays.

Sometimes use 2 students and sometimes use 3 or 4. Examples for role-plays: kicking/pushing in line, making faces, saying “I’m not your friend,” making fun of or teasing someone, throwing water on you in the bathroom, pushing desk, crowding your space, not sharing, taking your things without asking.

FOR RECESS – they are to use the painted cloud on the blacktop as The Peace Rug® outdoors!

Supplemental information for older students:

- * Teach about Violence Continuum (nonphysical to physical violence): Disrespect, “The Look,” starting rumors, gesturing, staring, writing graffiti, threatening, name calling, stealing, damaging property, sexual harassment, spitting, shoving, punching, hitting, kicking, showing knife or gun.

- * Teach what a bully does and what a Victim is.**
- * Teach what to say if you are a Victim:**
 - Stop bullying me**
 - I will report you (tell)**
 - Then get away**
- * Teach that it is NOT OK to be a Bully and it is NOT OK to be a Victim!**
- * Teach that they need to find their VOICE! And to use The Peace Rug®.**
- * Ask for a show of hands if they will say these things in the coming weeks.**

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Role-Play Suggestions for Facilitator As You Teach The Peace Rug Process

Discuss the most common interpersonal conflict issues with students of all ages:

- Name calling
- Teasing
- Hurting feelings
- Eye rolling
- Laughing at another
- [disrespectful] anger
- saying bad words
- excluding others
- telling lies
- stealing
- being mean
- hitting/fighting/punching/pushing
- “You are not my friend.”

Examples of scenarios:

Student A (victim): I want us to be OK with each other, but we have a problem. Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): OK.

Student A: When you call me names, I feel hurt. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop?

Student B: Yes.

[Shake hands]

Student A (victim): I want us to be friends, but we have a problem. Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): OK.

Student A: When you tease me, I feel disrespected. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop?

Student B: Yes, I can. But we still have a problem. When you roll your eyes at me, I feel disrespected too. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop?

Student A: Yes.

[High-five]

Student A (victim): Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): Yes.

Student A: When you laugh at me, my feelings are very hurt. I'd like you to stop laughing AT me and laugh WITH me instead. Can you?

Student B: Yes, I will.

[Hug]

Student A (victim): Could we please go to The Peace Rug?

Student B: OK.

Student A: I'd like us to be friends, but when you say bad words to me I feel very disrespected. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop?

Student B: Yes.

[Shake hands]

Student A (victim): I want us to be OK with each other. Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): Yes.

Student A: When you leave me out at recess, I feel very hurt. I feel excluded. I feel disrespected. I am going to choose to play with others but wanted you to know how I was feeling. I would like to ask you to think about not hurting others even when you tell them "no."

Student B: OK.

[Shake hands]

Student A (victim): Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): OK.

Student A: I'd like us to be friends, but we have a problem. When you tell lies about me, I feel disrespected. It hurts my feelings. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop?

Student B: OK. I'm sorry.

[Shake hands]

Student A (victim): Would you go to The Peace Rug with me?

Student B (bully): yes.

Student A: When you hit me [fight with me, punch me, push me], I feel angry. I would like for you to stop bullying me. Can you stop?

Student B: I guess.

(continued from previous page)

Student A: I don't want to have to report you, but I will if it continues. I would rather talk things out here.

Student B: Me too. I can stop.

Student A: Have I offended you in any way? If so, I want to work that out as well.

Student B: No, you haven't hurt me. I have been hurting you.

[High-five]

Student A (victim): Could we go to The Peace Rug? We have a problem.

Student B (bully): I guess.

Student A: When you tell me that you are not my friend, I feel hurt. I'd like you to not say those words. It's OK if you don't want to play with me, but those words are hurtful.

Student B: Well, I said that because you took my crayons today without asking. When you do that, I feel disrespected. I'd like you to ask me before you take something. Can you?

Student A: OK.

APPENDIX B

Picture of The Peace Rug® with Instructions and Audiocassette

APPENDIX B: PICTURE OF THE PEACE RUG® WITH INSTRUCTIONS AND
AUDIOCASSETTE



APPENDIX C

Transcript of Audiocassette

APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIOCASSETTE

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INTRO

- Thank you for your purchase of The Peace Rug®. We truly believe that if The Peace Rug® is presented well by you and used well by the participants, behavior can be modified and lives can be changed.
- This audiotape is made to help you with the instructions on how to teach The Peace Rug® Process. The same instructions are also found in the brochure.
- In just a moment you will hear the voice of Helen McIntosh who is the school counselor who invented The Peace Rug. She has her Masters and Specialist's Degree in Guidance and Counseling, is certified in Reality Therapy, and is currently a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology. Helen's passion has been to find some way to help children to "find their voice" and have the words to speak out when they felt disrespected, hurt, angry, offended, teased, or bullied.
- The Peace Rug® is simple. It's easy for anyone to learn and for teachers and parents to teach. Once The Peace Rug® is taught, it may take a few weeks to facilitate its use. Eventually, children and adults will begin to use it without prompting.
- **Created to be originally used in the classroom, its application is universal. People of all ages, genders, and races can use The Peace Rug® Process. The dialogue can be adapted for both families and employees. The Peace Rug® is meant to provide a physical place for peaceful discussions for both children and adults. It is not meant to be a substitute for counseling.**

HELEN

Violence permeates our society. Our children are particularly vulnerable because what they see and hear, they eventually act out. I hope that with use of The Peace Rug® on a daily basis, a dramatic change can occur with the children in your classroom or home as well as with employees in the workplace.

How do you start?

- **Share with your family, classroom or place of business that you would like to have a way to solve conflicts as problems arise.**
- **Explain that the goal is to use The Peace Rug® is to reach agreements to make the relationship better. In order to do this, each person takes a turn sharing his or her feelings and thoughts in a special way *without interruption*. One listens while another talks.**

How do you ask someone to come to The Peace Rug®?

When a conflict arises, your response is very important. In a calm and non-controlling way, ask the other person(s) if he or she would come to The Peace Rug® with you in order to make the relationship or friendship better.

- A child might say, "I want us to be friends. Could we please go to The Peace Rug® and talk about the problem?"
- An adult might say, "I want us to have a good relationship. Could we please go to The Peace Rug® to talk about the problem between us?"
- **You may sit, stand or use chairs on or around The Peace Rug® in a way that is comfortable and appropriate for your situation**

. What are some suggested words to say when it is your turn?

A child might say again “I want us to be friends,” and then say:

- “When you...”
- “I feel or felt...”
- “and I need/want to talk about the problem between us.” [NOT “I see YOU as the problem,” but “I see THIS as the problem.”]
- “and this is what I’d like to do to make things better...”

An adult might say again “I want our relationship to be better,” and then say:

- “When you [share what happened]...”
- “I feel or felt...”
- “and I need/want us to talk about the problem between us.” [NOT “I see YOU as the problem,” but “I see THIS as the problem.”]
- “and this is what I’m willing to do for our relationship to be better...”

“I’m not saying what you should do; I’m only saying what I will do to make things better.”

Then the other person(s), if willing, may then use these same key words. They choose to agree on what is the problem and what they might wish to do for the relationship to be better.

What are some other phrases to help identify the problem and resolve the conflict?

- “We’re having difficulty with ...”
- “Do you think that what we’re doing us now is helping us or hurting us?”
- “Are we moving closer or further apart?”
- “Is this getting us where we want to be in our relationship?”

These words are helpful to give you a “voice,” and also, to assist you in sharing your hurt in an emotionally safer way. Keep sharing at The Peace Rug® until you can agree upon a plan to make things better. If an agreement is reached, you may celebrate a new beginning in ways such as shaking hands, giving a high five or a hug.

We ask that no verbal or physical fighting take place while using The Peace Rug® process. If one person feels that the other person is out of control or that talking is making the problem worse, he or she may want to leave The Peace Rug® and begin the process at a later time.

What if the other person won't participate?

- **We cannot control others, but we do have a choice to respectfully express our thoughts and feelings and to *attempt* to make peace. If there is no resolution, then The Peace Rug® becomes the place where you at least found your voice and did all you could about the conflict.**
- **If you were able to respectfully share your desire to have a good relationship or friendship by going to The Peace Rug®, these words may yet have a powerful effect on the other person sometime in the future. Moreover, you can even ask if there is another time when you could meet together at The Peace Rug®.**

Some other applications of The Peace Rug® are:

- **It can mark a special “do not disturb” place when someone needs to be quiet, think, or plan!**

- **It can be a good place for family meetings and other times of sharing ideas.**

Adults need to assist small children at first until they get more familiar with the process. We hope you will help them. If a small child should ask you to go to The Peace Rug®, we hope you will go!

Choosing to come together and to put away conflicts is to be praised. We earnestly hope that you will have many successes at The Peace Rug®. We would like to hear your stories, so please visit at our website at www.peacerug.com so that we may share in your peace.

Warning:

The Peace Rug® Process is intended to be used by two or more persons, each of whom desires to resolve conflicts peacefully. The use of The Peace Rug® Process should never be forced upon anyone, and should not be attempted by or with anyone under the influence of legal or illegal drugs, alcohol or other substances. If you find that your attempted use of The Peace Rug® Process is causing another person to become angry or more hostile, you should stop. If you ever feel physically, mentally or emotionally threatened, you should get away from the other person.

WHILE IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE PEACE RUG® PROCESS OFFERS THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNICATION AND THE HOPE FOR BETTER RELATIONSHIPS, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE OR WARRANTY CONCERNING THE PEACE, SAFETY, SECURITY OR SUCCESS OF THE PEACE RUG® PROCESS.

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Patent Pending**

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The questions asked of students are as follows:

Have you ever used The Peace Rug?

Tell me about it...

How did you feel when you used it?

How did it change you?

How did it change the other person(s)?

How did it change the problem?

Is there anything else you want to tell me about your story?

The semi-structured, springboard questions for teachers are as follows:

Has The Peace Rug ever been used in your classroom?

Tell me about it...

Did your students learn the procedures?

Were they easy to learn?

If your students used the Peace Rug process, what do you think their experience was?

What, if anything, has changed for you?

Is there a change in the number of incidences of conflict in your classroom since the students began using The Peace Rug?

What could you tell me about some of the kinds of changes you have noticed?

How has the climate changed?

What are any other perceptions of its use and impact?

Please describe any feelings you have associated with its use.

How do you think your students can apply this to actual situations?

APPENDIX E

Letter to Parents of Student Participants (in English)

APPENDIX E: LETTER TO PARENTS OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

(IN ENGLISH)

Dear _____:

As a doctoral student at Argosy University at Sarasota, I am conducting qualitative research into the effectiveness, value, and usefulness of The Peace Rug®.

As part of my research I will be conducting interviews with teachers and students, and would like for your child to participate in my research. Each student will be asked questions about The Peace Rug® and the answers will be recorded on an audiocassette tape. Each interview will take about 15 minutes. The tapes will be destroyed at the completion of this research study.

The participation of your child is entirely voluntary, and you and your child have the right to terminate the interview at any time. Your child will be identified in the research paper only as Student 1, 2, or 3.

Thank you so much for considering your child's participation in this research. Attached (page 2) you will find a permission form to sign and return to your child's teacher if you are willing for your child to participate in this study.

Helen B. McIntosh
Counselor
Roan School
1116 Roan Street
Dalton, GA 30721
706-226-3225

APPENDIX F

Letter to Parents of Student Participants (in Spanish)

APPENDIX F: LETTER TO PARENTS OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS
(IN SPANISH)

Apreciados _____:

Como estudiante de doctorado de la Argosy Universidad at Sarasota, estoy haciendo un estudio acerca de la eficacia, el valor y la utilidad del Peace Rug®.

Como parte de mi estudio llevaré a cabo entrevistas con maestros y estudiantes y me gustaría que su niño(a) participara en mi estudio. A cada estudiante se le harán dos preguntas acerca Del Peace Rug® y las respuestas serán grabadas en cintas cassette. Cada entrevista durará mas o menos quince (15) minutos. Las cintas se destruirán al final del estudio.

La participación de su niño(a) es totalmente voluntaria y Ud. y su hijo tienen el derecho de terminar la entrevista a cualquier momento. Su niño (a) será identificado en el estudio solamente como estudiante 1, 2, ó 3.

Les agradezco mucho el considerar la participación de su niño (a) en este estudio. Adjunto (página 2) encontrará un formulario de permiso. Por favor firmelo y devuélvalo al maestro de su niño (a) si es que desea que su niño (a) participe en este estudio...

Helen B. McIntosh
Consejera
Roan School
1116 Roan Street
Dalton, GA 30721
706-226-3225

APPENDIX G

Informed Consent to Parents of Student Participants (in English)

APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT TO PARENTS OF STUDENT

PARTICIPANTS (IN ENGLISH)

A. I am willing for you to have an approximately fifteen (15) minute interview with my child using a tape-recorder.

B. I understand that this research involves questions about The Peace Rug®.

C. I understand that only a letter such as 1, 2, or 3 will identify my child; and that the interview tapes and transcripts will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. No information that would identify my child will be disclosed or published.

D. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks or discomforts involved.

E. I understand that I may contact the person named below if I have questions about the research or my child's rights:

Dr. Jim Reynolds
Argosy University at Sarasota
5250 17th Street
Sarasota, FL 34235
1-800-331-5995

F. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that I may terminate the interview at any time with no penalty or loss. I hereby give my permission for my child to be interviewed and to give consent for his or her responses to be included in the study.

_____ Parent Signature				_____ Date
Relationship to Child: (please circle)				
Male Parent	Female Parent	Male Grandparent	Female Grandparent	
Legal Guardian	Aunt	Uncle	Other Relative _____	

_____ Student Signature	_____ Date
----------------------------	---------------

APPENDIX H

Informed Consent to Parents of Student Participants (in Spanish)

APPENDIX H: INFORMED CONSENT TO PARENTS OF STUDENT

PARTICIPANTS (IN SPANISH)

- A. Doy consentimiento para que Ud. Entreviste a mi niño (a) por aproximadamente quince (15) minutos usando una grabadora.
- B. Entiendo que esta encuesta es acerca Del Peace Rug®.
- C. Entiendo que mi niño (a) será identificado solamente por una letra como la 1, 2, ó 3, y que las cintas usades durante la entrevista serán destruídas a la culminación del estudio; Ninguna información que pudiera identificar a su niño (a) será revelada ó publicada.
- D. Entiendo que no hay riezos ni inconvenientes anticipados.
- E. Entiendo que puedo ponerme en contacto con la persona abajo mencionada en caso de tener preguntas sobre el estudio o los derechos de mi niño (a):

Dr. Jim Reynolds
Argosy University at Sarasota
5250 17th Street
Sarasota, FL 34235
1-800-331-5995

- F. Entiendo que la participación de mi niño(a) es voluntaria y que yo podría terminar la entrevista a cualquier momento sin compromiso ni obligación. Por la presente doy permiso para que las respuestas de mi niño(a) sean incluídas en éste estudio.

Firma del Padre ó Madre

Fecha

Parentezco con el niño (a): (por favor indique)

Padre Madre Abuelo Abuela

Guardián Legal Tía Tió Otro Pariente _____

Firma del Estudiante

Fecha

APPENDIX I

Letter to Teacher Participants

APPENDIX I: LETTER TO TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Dear _____:

As a doctoral student at Argosy University at Sarasota, I am conducting qualitative research into the effectiveness, value, and usefulness of The Peace Rug®.

As part of my research I will be conducting interviews with teachers and students, and would like for you to participate. Each interview would be approximately twenty (20) minutes long, and will be recorded on audiocassette. The tapes will be destroyed at the completion of this research study.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to terminate the interview at any time. You will be identified in the research paper only as Teacher A, B, or C in the Dalton Public School system.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please indicate your willingness in the attached document (page 2) and then return the attachment to my mailbox.

Thank you so much for considering participation in this research. I sincerely appreciate your feedback and your time.

Helen B. McIntosh

APPENDIX J

Informed Consent Document for Teachers

APPENDIX J: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR TEACHERS

A. I am willing for you to schedule an approximately twenty (20) minute interview with me.

B. I understand that this research involves an investigation into the effect of The Peace Rug®.

C. I understand that I will only be identified as Teacher A, B, or C in the Dalton Public School system, and that the interview tapes and transcripts will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. No individually identifiable information will be disclosed or published.

D. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks or discomforts involved.

E. I understand that I may contact the person named below if I have questions about the research or my rights:

Dr. Jim Reynolds
Argosy University at Sarasota
5250 17th Street
Sarasota, FL 34235

F. I state that I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I may terminate the interview at any time with no penalty or loss. I hereby give my permission to be interviewed and to give consent for my responses to be included in the data.

Signature

Date

G. I understand that I have the right to review the results of the research if I so wish, and may obtain a copy of the results by contacting you:

Helen B. McIntosh
Roan School
1116 Roan Street
Dalton, GA 30721

APPENDIX K

Lesson Plan To Explain Informed Consent

APPENDIX K: LESSON PLAN TO EXPLAIN INFORMED CONSENT

Boys and girls, before we have our lesson today I want to take a minute to explain something I brought with me. Did you know that I am a student at a school, just like you? I even have homework! As part of my homework, I need to ask some students here at Roan some questions about The Peace Rug®. If any of you would be OK with me asking you some questions about The Peace Rug®, I'll be asking you to raise your hand and I will give you two pieces of paper that are stapled together to take home to your family. I can't ask you the questions about The Peace Rug® unless someone in your family signs this yellow line [Then I pointed to the line where I used a yellow marker and highlighted the parent signature line on both the English and Spanish sides]. This is the only paper you need to bring back to school. The other part explains to your family what I am going to be doing. For those of you who bring back signed papers, we will sit down in my office and I will ask you about seven questions. I will be using a tape recorder and you will speak your answers into it. Are there any questions about this? If you are not comfortable with the idea of doing this, it's really okay. But if you do feel okay about my asking questions, raise your hand so I can give you the papers.

APPENDIX L

Student Narratives on Frequency of Use

APPENDIX L: STUDENT NARRATIVES ON FREQUENCY OF USE

Student	Narrative
Student #1	has used it with lots of people
Student #2	has used it 10 or 11 times; used it for several years
Student #3	has used it
Student #4	has used it for several years
Student #5	has used it this year
Student #6	has used it a lot last year and this year
Student #7	mostly used it last year
Student #8	has used it for three years
Student #9	has used it with boys and girls and her mother and cousin
Student #10	has used it two years
Student #11	has used it
Student #12	has used it a lot, for several years
Student #13	has used it this year
Student #14	has used it
Student #15	has used it for three years
Student #16	has used it
Student #17	has not used it in the classroom but has had Peace Rug conversations in the hall, in the gym, and at recess
Student #18	has seen others use it
Student #19	has used it

Student #20	has used it at school and home
Student #21	has used it in classroom
Student #22	has used it
Student #23	has used it last year and this year
Student #24	has used it two years
Student #25	has used it
Student #26	has used it
Student #27	has used it two years
Student #28	has used it
Student #29	has used it this year
Student #30	has used it two years
Student #31	has used it two years
Student #32	has seen others use it
Student #33	has used it
Student #34	has seen others use it
Student #35	has used it
Student #36	has used it three years
Student #37	has seen others use it
Student #38	used it in kindergarten
Student #39	used it this year and last year
Student #40	has used it
Student #41	has used it
Student #42	has used it lots of times; has used it three years

Student #43	has used it
Student #44	has used it three years
Student #45	has used it
Student #46	has seen it used but has not used it personally
Student #47	used it last year but not this year
Student #48	uses it at school and at home
Student #49	has used it for the last two years
Student #50	has used it for two years
Student #51	has used it in classroom
Student #52	has used it for two years
Student #53	has used it two years
Student #54	has used it two years
Student #55	has not used it
Student #56	has seen others use it
Student #57	has used it
Student #58	has used it several years
Student #59	has used it
Student #60	has used it

APPENDIX M

Student Narratives on Reported Experiences

APPENDIX M: STUDENT NARRATIVES ON REPORTED EXPERIENCES

Student	Narrative
Student #1	<p>"On The Peace Rug, you [sic] supposed to say 'when you hurt my feelings, I feel sad - can you please stop?' It changed me...then I started being everybody's friend...When we got out [sic] The Peace Rug, we said we were sorry and we say we be friends [sic]. It worked. I went on my own and they [teacher] was happy."</p>
Student #2	<p>"When you first go on The Peace Rug you have to tell them how you feel and ask them will they stop...tell them how you feel. It felt good cause you was [sic] getting all your anger and stuff out...It changed me from not fighting and hitting other people so when they start doing other stuff to make me mad... It worked."</p>
Student #3	<p>"When I go to The Peace Rug I kinda [sic] sit there and then when I get finished then I gotta [sic] say something and then I say something anyway when they get me aggravated or something...and then I say 'when you...I feel sad and angry...so can you stop please' and then they say 'yes, I'll stop.' It changed me because I'm sorry I said, 'follow me and we'll never do that again.' I don't really know about their life or their heart but I think it changed a little bit of theirs. It's better. It's better. Anytime we go to The Peace Rug we learn stuff and everything. It changed it [the problem] because of how I said it...in a nice way, and we do it</p>

calm, and you do it calm... that you're sorry...that changed their life and their relationship and everything else."

Student #4 "Everybody on the bus said that I was the one that was talking loud on the bus and stuff and saying bad words and stuff but I wasn't. I shared my feelings about what they said. I felt good. It changed me by being friends with them. It changed the problem by telling them to stop."

Student #5 "The Peace Rug is when you sit down and you talk to somebody and you share your feelings and you make up with each other. I felt shy at first and nervous. It has changed me to be a nicer person. It changed the other person: they are being nice to me. Now it's better. I also use the Peace Rug outside at recess."

Student #6 "I felt scared when I used it but I got more friends. It changed the other person by being more nicer [sic]. It changed the problem because we became friends."

Student #7 "I used the Peace Rug inside the classroom, especially with one other student [bully]. Felt safe and pretty good when I used it. Changed the other person because he knew I stood up to him. It changed the problem. The Peace Rug is a rug that you can talk on...it's a rug that you can talk your feelings with the other person how you're feeling and you keep on trying until they say yes and you tell them all about it."

Student #8

"The Peace Rug is about having a great time when someone is fighting each other and you can just tell them to stop it and it works. I felt great when I used it. When they were bothering me, they stopped when I talked to them on The Peace Rug. It changed me a lot of times since I was in the first grade. It changed the other person by asking them some sad things that they did to me. It changed the problem because I just wanted to play with one of them and then they said no and I took them to The Peace Rug and asked them could I play with them the next time and they said 'yes.' There were three big kids while I was at City Park and they were being bossy. There was a Peace Rug, and I told them to meet me at The Peace Rug at 1:00 and they did."

Student #9

"When you use The Peace Rug you say nice stuff to your friend that was bothering you and you work it out and then you be [sic] friends again. Felt good using it. It changed me to be happy. It changed the other person to be happy too. In the night my mom was getting mad and I tell her to don't hit me [sic] and if we can talk. It changed the problem."

Student #10

"One day I did it two times. The first time, me and a couple of other girls were at the library [in a triangle] and then they said they did not want to be my friend because I did not pick them. I felt sad. I hugged them. I felt good, happy, stronger. They said sorry and then we were friends again. The other time I used The Peace Rug,

another girl said she did not want to be my friend and didn't want to play with me outside. She started crying because she was glad that she was my friend."

Student #11

"This girl doesn't want to be my friend and that isn't very nice. I wanted to be her friend but she didn't want to be mine and that is mean. [I took her to The Peace Rug] and it was good, great. It changed me by learning that if you are mean to your friends then they don't want to play with you. But I don't want to do that to another student because she is my friend and I want to play with her. She gave me and another girl a hug and then she said that she would be friends and never say mean things to me again. Another girl said that she was my friend and she would never be mean to me and if I get lost she would try to go find me. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug."

Student #12

"When I used it, it felt good. And I helped the other person do the right thing. It changed the other person by talking it out with them. Talking about it changed the problem. There was a girl in class who said she wished that I was never [sic] born. I told her that we needed to go to The Peace Rug....when you do this it makes me feel like this."

Student #13

"It was a good thing; it helped me. I felt happy. It changed me to not fight anymore and be friends. It changed [the others]...they stopped doing bad things. It changed the problem."

Student #14

"It was easy and it helped me to be friends with the others. I felt good when I was using it. It changed me by being friends with others and being peaceful and not fighting. I think it changed the other person by talking and giving kind words. It helped with the problem."

Student #15

"When I was in first grade, this kid was punching me and teasing me so the teacher told me I should go to The Peace Rug. [After using it] I felt proud of myself. It changed me...it changed the other person. They push their buddy around and call names [sic] and sometimes they would get suspended and now they don't. It changed the problem by using it."

Student #16

"It's good to use when you meet new kids or if you have done something to them you can apologize to them. And it's a way to meet people and be friends with people. And if there is a group of kids that play together and don't play with you if you take them to The Peace Rug maybe they will ask you to come play with them. If I was the person who did something to them I would feel bad but I would still feel happy that I went to The Peace Rug to apologize to them and I felt like a good friend and it made me feel really good. I am very good but if I did something bad or got angry I would get on The Peace Rug and the kids would tell me what I did to them. I would start to feel how they felt and see how I would feel if they did it to me. So I see how I should treat people like I want to be

treated. The other person, if they had done something to me, I am sure that if they saw how I felt they can see how it would hurt to be treated like that so that they will treat other people better. If me [sic] and the other person had problems like calling names or fighting we talked about it and noticed that we were hurting each other and that as we talked it worked out and the problem started to go away [sic]. I think The Peace Rug is a great thing and I think if it wasn't here there would be a whole lot of bad. There wouldn't be a way to make problems go away."

Student #17

"[I] have seen it change the people who go...It helps people be friends again. I feel fine [when I use The Peace Rug]. It changed me ...it made it so they didn't do it again."

Student #18

"Everybody didn't do the bad thing again. It changed the problem. Two kids are using it, and two other kids were using it because they were not doing their job and they were fighting. So they had to go talk about it. [If someone hurt her feelings, she would say] 'When you hurt my feelings I feel sad. I'd like you to stop. Can you stop? Then we hand shake or high five.'"

Student #19

"Well, my friend said they were calling me names and I just sat down and talked to them about it and we became friends again. At first I was sad then after we finished I was happy. I got more friends and I became friends with everybody. It kind of changed them. They became nicer. Well, the problem hasn't happened

anymore so I am happy about that. I did it at my house once for my mom and dad and me and my brother. Me [sic] and another girl got into an argument and I asked her if she wanted to go to The Peace Rug and she said 'yes' and we went and worked it out and now we're friends again."

Student #20 "[I have used it] with my sisters and here. In my house because my sisters would hit me [sic]. It makes me sad because my sister says that I was doing something and I wasn't and that makes me sad. So on The Peace Rug I tell her that when she does that it makes me feel sad and I ask her to stop. She started to be nice and not tell lies. I told her when she does that I feel sad."

Student #21 "I use it in the classroom. It was easy to learn."

Student #22 "When you feel bad [one uses The Peace Rug]....sad. It changed the problem. It helped make things better. I should take other kids to The Peace Rug. I feel better [when I use it].

Student #23 "It's kind of like if someone feels like they don't want to tell somebody their feelings, they just take them to The Peace Rug. I felt happy [to go to The Peace Rug]. It changed me. I would just say when they told me they were very sorry I started to really feel different. I told them how it really hurt my feelings and how it made me mad and they said they were sorry. It changed the problem because we really did talk it out. One time after recess, when I was in second grade, this other boy kept pushing me at the

water fountain so I took him to The Peace Rug and told him how it made me feel and asked him to stop and then we were friends.”

Student #24

“When I first went to The Peace Rug I wasn’t sure if I was going to know how to use it ‘cause that day I had a lot of things to do and a lot going on. I felt sort of sleepy and not so good too, so I didn’t think I was going to figure it out. After I went to The Peace Rug I felt a lot better and went and played again. When I was going to it I was thinking ‘what if it doesn’t work’ but afterward I felt better because everything was over with and was okay. It sort of changed me because at first when I went to The Peace Rug I was thinking that not everyone has feelings and all that, but after I went to it and worked everything out I realized that everyone does have feelings, even grown ups do, everybody. I know it changed one person. It changed the problem a lot. It seemed like everything was back to the way it is supposed to be. It was sort of strange at first because I was wondering what would happen if the other person didn’t want to go to The Peace Rug but then after they went with me everything was back to the way it was supposed to be. One time I had to get a teacher to get the person to go to The Peace Rug with me because they didn’t want to go and I had had enough of them bothering me so then they agreed to go and we worked it out. I use The Peace Rug at home on the trampoline with my cousins to work out problems.”

- Student #25 “It is very special to me and I get to have fun with it and I get to talk with somebody when I have to talk something out. [I felt] kind of shy sometimes and then I got used to it. It changed me because when I wasn’t feeling good I used it and when I would get in a fight with somebody I would use it. I used it a lot in second grade. They stopped being mean to me and told me they wanted to be my friend and stuff.”
- Student #26 “[I felt] sad when I talked. I did a good job. They got nicer.”
- Student #27 “We talk to the person that we fight or have problems with. [I felt] fine. It changed me; it changed them. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug. Things are better.”
- Student #28 “I had a fight with another girl because she said I rolled my eyes at her and I didn’t. At the bus stop another girl had suggested that we played tag and I looked up at the sky and she thought that I was rolling my eyes at her and I wasn’t. I felt happy because there is something to do [The Peace Rug] to make it stop and make it better. Me [sic] and the other girl are best friends again. There was a girl that was telling me not to play with a certain boy and I told her that I thought she needed to go with him and talk to him on The Peace Rug. They got it worked out.”
- Student #29 “[When I used it, I felt] good. We all became friends. My brother and I have Peace Rug conversations at home.”

- Student #30 “[When I used it, I felt] happy.” Note: She nodded “yes” but did not speak in response to follow up questions such as, “Would you say that it changed you any? Did it change the other person? Did it change the problem? Did you become better friends?”
- Student #31 “I was thinking about fighting and then I don’t [sic] want to fight anymore. [When I used it] I felt sad. It changed both of us. [It made things] better. I got in trouble for fighting a bunch of times and the teacher said they were going to send me to the principal if I didn’t stop so I stopped because of The Peace Rug.”
- Student #32 “I saw them using it [The Peace Rug] at recess. I think that it was a good thing. It helped them and changed them. It took care of the problem.”
- Student #33 “When me and my friends have a fight then I tell them that we need to go to The Peace Rug and they say ‘yes.’ Then I ask them if they could stop doing stuff to me and they say ‘yes.’ [I felt] happy. We didn’t fight anymore.”
- Student #34 “They go there to talk about things they are doing wrong. They say, ‘Can you please stop doing that?’ [They feel] better. When they talk about what’s not right, I look at them and they are friends again. This year is much happier.”
- Student #35 “They say things like ‘thank you’ and ‘sorry.’ Sorry for pushing and things. One kid was really bad for a long time and now he has changed a lot. It changed the class. One time I went to The Peace

Rug when I was in first grade because someone pushed me and the teacher told us to go to the Peace Rug and we went and he said he was sorry.”

Student #36

“This girl called me fat. Then I ignored her then she kept coming up behind me and calling me fat. Then I asked her if she wanted to go to The Peace Rug and she said ‘no,’ so then I asked the teacher if we could go to The Peace Rug and then she said ‘yes.’ [When I used it, I felt] good. It made [me] feel happy and we played together. I told her I was sorry and I would never do it again and she said I was her friend and I forgive you.”

Student #37

“I have seen others use The Peace Rug in my classroom for three years. [I felt] Sad for them. It changed some of them [my friends]. When people call each other names they should go to The Peace Rug.”

Student #38

“When I got to school this girl was laughing about me and making fun of me. So first I told the teacher. Then I don’t remember what happened but I asked her to stop calling me names and laughing about me. She called me a midget and stuff. I asked her to go to The Peace Rug. Sometimes when I go to The Peace Rug, like I haven’t gone this year, but sometimes I go and I am glad that it is here.”

- Student #39 “I felt great [when I used The Peace Rug]. It has changed me and the other person. We make friends and when we fight we go together. It changed the problem.”
- Student #40 [After talking on The Peace Rug, I felt] Happy. It changed me by talking to the other person. The other person changed. They stopped.”
- Student #41 [When I used it, I felt] Pretty funny. It changed me. It changed the problem.”
- Student #42 “I used to get frustrated on some days and it was because this other girl kept bothering me and she would hit me and twist my arm around so the teacher told us to go to The Peace Rug. When I got into a fight with some other girls in first grade I took them to The Peace Rug and we worked things out.”
- Student #43 “When me [sic] and another student were fighting we had to go to The Peace Rug and we forgave each other. There were some changes. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. The problem changed. We went outside and we said, ‘let’s play not fight’ [sic] and we didn’t fight.”
- Student #44 “When this other kid was hitting me we went to The Peace Rug. When he was still hitting me it was hurting and I told him to stop but he was still doing it, so we went to The Peace Rug. It changed the problem. He stopped hitting me. When I was in reading no one

- would play with me after I finished my work. [So I took them to The Peace Rug and] Some of the other kids said they were sorry.”
- Student #45 “It’s very hard with some people. When it is a big kid or something they might try to hurt you when you go to The Peace Rug or someone might get mad at you when you tell them about it. [When asked if someone ever tried to hurt him or get mad at him, he said ‘no.’] I felt safe on The Peace Rug. It is fun when it is your best friend and you have a problem or something. Not yet but I am going to [when asked if he used it at home]. I am going to take my babysitter because she is always telling me what to do and she doesn’t listen to me so I want to take her to The Peace Rug.”
- Student #46 “I have not used The Peace Rug but have seen it used in the classroom. [I] learned what to say if [I] needed to use it.”
- Student #47 “[When I used it last year] We went to P.E and this girl told me a bad word so I told her to come to The Peace Rug with me, but she said ‘no.’ She stopped doing the bad thing but she is still not my friend.”
- Student #48 “Me [sic] and this other kid were not getting along good playing a game. I took him to The Peace Rug. Now we are making new friends and playing at recess. Sometimes when I see The Peace Rug it reminds me of that time when I went to it with that boy and it makes me happy... Kind of but only when we get in trouble [when asked if she and her sister use it home].”

- Student #49 “It helps me take care of myself and my friends. [When I used it, I felt] Good. It changed my family. Me [sic] and my sister talk about things like we are on The Peace Rug.”
- Student #50 “I used it last year and this year and when I was in kindergarten. [I felt] Good. It made my heart happy. It changed both [of us] and we hugged each other. We got to be friends. At home, when me [sic] and my sister fight, I use it. Every time she hits me I use it. She doesn’t know how to do it so I am teaching her.”
- Student #51 “We were in the classroom. There was this other kid that was telling me bad words. I told them that I wanted to go to The Peace Rug. Things got better. Yes [they stopped saying the bad words].”
- Student #52 “I used it this year and last year. I feel better [after The Peace Rug] and have become friends again. It changed the problem. They stopped bothering me.”
- Student #53 “Things worked out. Some girls were calling me names and I told them that if they wanted to go to The Peace Rug that we could stop it. It changed things. One time there was a boy that was calling me names and I took him to The Peace Rug and he said that he would stop it.”
- Student #54 “When we have a problem we go and sit on The Peace Rug. [I feel] Happy. Nice changes. Happy changes. The problem goes away. I used it a lot. I used The Peace Rug words in my neighborhood and at home.”

- Student #55 [This student was unfamiliar with The Peace Rug, so used this time to teach it and practice it. The student said he knew what to do now and would use it.]
- Student #56 [This student said he was absent when it was taught, but has seen others use it. We went over the script and he said he knew what to do now and would use it.]
- Student #57 “When I was in first grade a boy was saying bad words to me in Spanish so we went to The Peace Rug and talked and he stopped. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. It changed the problem. I have used it at home with my little sister. Sometimes she hits me in the face and scratches me.”
- Student #58 “One day at recess they were saying bad words in English. [So I used The Peace Rug outside]. [When I used it, I felt] Happy. When we went to recess they asked me to play tag with them. We’re friends [now]. It changed the problem. At recess in first grade, my friend was stealing and said that he was not my friend anymore. I went to The Peace Rug with him and he became my friend again.”
- Student #59 “My friends kept calling me bad stuff and I went to talk to them on The Peace Rug and they wouldn’t listen and so I told my mom and she called the office and we talked on The Peace Rug and they stopped bothering me. [When I used it, I felt] A little bit fine. It changed the other person. They stopped telling me bad things. It changed the problem.”

Student #60

“We were going from lunch to the classroom this one boy hit another boy and made him hit my leg over here. We had to go to The Peace Rug. We were friends again. I felt like I had never used it before, but I knew what to say. I felt proud of myself. It changed me. It changed the problem by going to The Peace Rug.”

APPENDIX N

Teacher Narratives on Frequency of Use

APPENDIX N: TEACHER NARRATIVES ON FREQUENCY OF USE

Teacher	Narrative
Teacher A	used nearly every day in classroom and home
Teacher B	used numerous times: weekly, daily, sometimes more than once a day
Teacher C	used usually after recess
Teacher D	used a lot in the classroom
Teacher E	used a lot in the classroom
Teacher F	used in classroom
Teacher G	used in classroom
Teacher H	used in classroom, on playground, homes
Teacher I	used in the classroom but also uses The Peace Rug ideas in other places
Teacher J	uses in classroom
Teacher K	supervises Time-Out room where one is in use
Teacher L	doesn't have a classroom but has a child who uses it in home
Teacher M	has been used in lots of classrooms
Teacher N	has been used a lot in classrooms
Teacher O	has used it for years
Teacher P	has used it for four years
Teacher Q	has used it in classroom and home
Teacher R	has used it the last two years in classroom and home

Teacher S	has used it in classroom and home
Teacher T	has used it for four years
Teacher U	has used it in this special education resource room and home
Teacher V	has been used many times
Teacher W	has been used a lot; for four years
Teacher X	has used it
Teacher Y	has used it daily
Teacher Z	has used it at school and at own home

APPENDIX O

Teacher Narratives on Reported Experiences

APPENDIX O: TEACHER NARRATIVES ON REPORTED EXPERIENCES

Teacher	Narrative
Teacher A	<p>“We don't have to tell them to use it; they know to use it. If we have a problem we need to go talk about it. [It's] easy to learn. After they have talked it out, they go away peaceful [sic]. It is very successful for them. To me, the problems have always been solved. In fact, sometimes they enjoy it so much that they just start chatting and we have to say, 'okay, let's come back to class.' It's nice to have something, a tool, because it is frustrating when the children come up and they are arguing and saying, 'this person did this and this person did this' and you know... it's so nice to say, 'do you think maybe we need to talk about it?' And then they automatically know, 'We need to go to The Peace Rug.' And it's nice to have a tool. It's not really us as teachers solving the problem, they are solving the problem. [About changes] I've noticed an eagerness to want to talk to each other and work it out. The Peace Rug has never been a punishment thing. It is more of an exciting thing. They go to it with more of a positive attitude, like we need to solve it. There is never the attitude of, 'Oh, I don't want to go.' You know, so far they've had good attitudes about it. It's teaching them to communicate with each other and solve issues in</p>

a respectful way that you go about it and the care and respect that you have for another person's feelings. I love it. I think it's a wonderful invention. I try to use it for my own two children at home. They are still learning how to do it. Again, it is showing them how to respect each other when there is a problem. I think it's wonderful. They can use it in all parts of their lives, with parents or other adults in their life. When there is an issue at hand, I like the respectful way they ask the person or they tell their feelings about something that has happened and the care they should have about the other person's feelings and what was going on. It is something we can use throughout our whole lives and they are learning that now."

Teacher B

"The children are to the point where they just come up and say, 'We need to go to The Peace Rug.' They go and they take care of it. I sometimes hear them talking loudly to each other but they are working out their issues. They learned the procedures...they've been trained. The guidance counselor provides little sticks with what they need to say to each other. I think it has been good. I think they enjoy it. I think that sometimes it can be a fun way or a game way to work things out. But I think they have positive experiences. It has given me the power to say, 'You need to go work that out on The Peace Rug.' I don't have to be the moderator. They have to work it out themselves and that is the way life is.

You have to work things out yourselves. Overall, as a class, the number of incidences of conflict is down. But now the same children seem to need it continuously. That probably has to deal with their own issues. There is less tattling. They will just come up and say, "We need to go to The Peace Rug," so there is less tattling. It's made it easier for me to not have to spend that time working that out for them when they can go do it. I think that they feel comfortable that they have a place to go. I would say more than anything, it makes sense, doesn't it? Starting The Peace Rug with children and working things out, that's what we have to do as adults. It's teaching them about life at an early age and giving them the skills they need. It's a great idea, successful. It's life skills."

Teacher C

"When someone comes up and says 'so and so hit so and so,' I'll say, 'We're going to go inside. The rest of you go get water or go to the bathroom,' and those two I'll take to The Peace Rug. Then I just take them there and sit them down and tell them to talk and end up friends. They get in the water line. And usually they do end up doing it. It doesn't take very long. Sometimes I have to prompt them to find out what they did or what they said. Then I ask if that is what they would like to hear. Let's try another way to say it. Something like that. I see it as a means to draw attention to the fact that they are doing something that is not acceptable. What I have learned is that the wording of the procedures communicates a

general idea of 'let's talk' or 'this is not acceptable' and 'how can we apologize and think about not doing that again.' Or, 'What's a better way to do that?' It's a positive experience because they are not brushed off. They get a chance to listen and so they'll sit and stare at each other and maybe start grinning; or if they've been really hurt, then I'll say, 'Let's hear what happened.' Well 'he told me so and so...so I hit him.' Well, they will get heard and that is what is important. It is just so nice to say, 'Go to The Peace Rug.' And we don't hesitate, and if there is a problem, we send them to The Peace Rug. It probably does reduce the number of incidences. Children know there is a mechanism. They may need to be reminded of it. And it's useful to have them sit at The Peace Rug for a variety of complaints. I would say that it's a cure all. I have good feelings [associated with its use]. To the teacher I'm with, it's either gotten a higher priority or lower. I would say that three out of four teachers it has had a higher priority. I am trying to think of teachers as well as myself pointing to it and saying, 'Go work it out.' It has become a very useful vehicle for me. I'm in the classroom half a day with one and half a day with the other. Now it's accepted for either teacher to say, "Go to The Peace Rug." Some of them [students] have realized that if there is an incident they will end up on The Peace Rug as a prerequisite to going to

timeout. And others will simply find themselves using it as an alternative.”

Teacher D

“At the beginning of the year, we talked about how we were going to use The Peace Rug; and so we talked about it, introduced it. I think that you introduced it or talked about it as well. And then when children would come to me and there would be problems or conflict, I would go with them to The Peace Rug and have them face each other. And I would also have the little card above my Peace Rug that says, ‘When you do this...I feel’ and they have to fill in the two blanks. So we started out that I would do this with the students and I would help them know how to talk to each other about whatever conflict had happened. So, whenever The Peace Rug was needed in the first couple of months, I would go and do it with them. But now because they see how it is supposed to be done, they are able to do it on their own. This is something they don’t see a lot of at home or in the neighborhood or anywhere. It is something that has to be taught. It is easy to learn but there are first some things that have to be unlearned about how people deal with conflict. It’s easy but it takes a while to do it. They usually don’t leave it [The Peace Rug] until they have resolved the conflict. They sometimes sit there and not talk for a while so I have to try and get them going. But, I don’t know of a time they have not come away without working it out. It helps me as a teacher to be

able to teach instead of having to deal ...having to take two children aside to resolve conflicts and taking away time that I need for teaching and working with the whole class on something. It gives me more time to be with my class as a whole instead of putting them on hold. I think the change is the way they have learned to work it out. There are still conflicts that come up. It is hard for me to give an answer if conflicts have decreased. But I think what is important is that they have learned how to work conflicts out. There is a lot less use of a physical approach to how they are supposed to work things out solving a conflict and much more talking. [About changes] Being able to work out conflicts. First graders being able to take initiative to confront each other and to talk about what hurt them or how they feel left out. We work together and not against each other. I try to help my students have the idea that we are a family and we are for each other and we are here to help each other and we have to work out conflicts. I hope that the students will take it home and be a model for their parents and how they are supposed to work things out. I think more college students in counseling need to know about it. I feel like it's a good way and a simple way and a positive way to help students start learning at an early age how they should work out conflicts with other people. Especially when they are playing with other students

from this school they can be a model for other students who aren't from this school. They can use it in everyday situations."

Teacher E "I felt like the students probably taught me the procedures because I was new and they seemed to be very familiar with it. There were times at the beginning of the year when I didn't really understand it before you and I had talked. They would come up and say, "We need to go to The Peace Rug," and I just thought it was a great idea that they were willing to do that. I think it definitely works and they seem to make peace with each other. I find it neat that at that age it's happened many times a boy doesn't want to sit with a girl and you know that's a biggie. But if a boy upsets a girl he goes back to the girl and talks things out. And it's so cute how they are learning to talk things out so I definitely think it's working. I think that it has been, in my experience. I've had situations where I had to be the one to direct peace talks; whereas this way they tell me there is a situation, I tell them they need to go talk. It's kind of like I don't have to be involved. I can just keep doing what I am doing. So that is a change for me. There may be the same number [of incidences] but I don't see that the same number is between the same students so it's not like those two are always at it and whatever. Generally there may be other conflicts but they're solving them. It's a pretty even distribution. Every now and then a problem arises and they deal with it. They are seeing there is a way

to work a situation out. Hopefully they will apply this in their own lives. If they leave angry or the conflict is not resolved or if I just have to punish each one it doesn't usually end as well as when they solve it themselves. I definitely think there is a difference because they are both leaving satisfied without feeling punished. I think it is a very timely thing...that when I first heard about it, I was surprised how well the children took to it and how well they understood. And you explained that some of them already knew that's just how we solve conflict in our classes. I am amazed how well it works at their age. I am impressed that it's teaching them skills to solve problems. Perhaps there were children years ago that we didn't address that felt like their conflict wasn't resolved and they carried that with them even into their adult or teenage years. I think it makes the child feel important that they do get to deal with it. It also teaches the person who started the conflict to take responsibility and be more sensitive. I am very impressed by it. I believe you have taught them not to be aggressive but not be afraid to speak out in the correct way that they can even share with their moms and dads and other family members the best way they have learned to resolve conflict. If they can't change them maybe they can change the next generation."

Teacher F

"It has been used when there has been conflict between students. I'll ask them to go sit on The Peace Rug. A lot of times, it has

been funny - someone will tell me that someone has done something I will tell them to go to The Peace Rug. A lot of times they won't go because they think they are tattling so it makes them think, this isn't that big of a deal so they let it go because it isn't really hurting them. So there is no need to go to The Peace Rug. It has helped because it helps them resolve their conflicts. I like them to go work it out instead of me getting involved with the 'he said, she said.' I like for them to go and work things out. They learned from you teaching them in the class and then I reinforce it. A lot of times when a student says, 'so and so did something to me', I say, 'did you say please stop?' If they say 'no,' then I tell them that they need to try that and if that doesn't work then they need to go to The Peace Rug. [It was] Easy to learn. A lot of times they are kind of shy about it and they don't want to go and talk about their problems. I think it's good. The times I have seen it used it has resolved the conflict without me getting involved and that is what it is about. I think it's good. [The change] The tattling elimination. [Change in incidences] I would say yes. Because they are not so quick...because they know I am going to say go work it out on The Peace Rug. I never get involved. I think if they don't want to do that, then they won't come to me and talk about it. During recess duty I will tell them to go sit on the rug and talk about their problems. Especially with little girls who like to bicker,

I have seen it work for them to go and sit down and talk about it. I think it has helped them to learn how to talk to each other to resolve their conflicts or that they are making a bigger deal out of this than they should. I am just going to let it go. A lot of times they think if the teacher gets involved they will make a bigger deal out of it than needs to be. I think if you equip students...like if someone is bothering you, tell them to stop. For some reason kids don't think that. If for some reason they don't stop, then they know they can go to the rug. I have seen changes in them taking more responsibility to resolve the conflict instead of making it a fight. Just talk it out. The climate is less angry. I think the kids like the process and knowing they are empowered. To know that they will be listened to is empowering. For a weaker student, it is an empowering thing that the other people have to listen to them. I am always at a distance making sure that they are working it out. I have worked in inner city schools and worked with upper middle class types [of] students and I think it is the best thing I have seen so far for working out conflicts. I think it teaches them to talk out problems, without fighting first. It teaches communication skills."

Teacher G

"I have had students who have come to me and said we need to meet on The Peace Rug. It is in a corner of the room where people can meet and other things can still be going on. So I try not to butt in unless it goes really long then I will because I don't want them

to miss anything. But the students will go back and use the techniques you have taught them. They didn't really need my help. I think it worked. It helped them to really verbalize what the problem was. When one could come out and tell the other what the problem was then they could work it out. So I think it has helped. It helps them get along better. It helps them see each other's point of view better. [About some of the kinds of changes] More tolerance. Not such short tempers. I wouldn't say the climate has changed but the atmosphere for the two students that were having problems with each other has changed for the better. Their perception is "this is a place to go when there is a problem." They can work it out - a way not to have to come and just tattle. They perceive it as a place that they can deal with something. My perception of it is that it should be something they initiate. I have mostly let the students say that they needed to go. I think it is wonderful to get things out in the open. When the children start verbalizing their feelings, it gets resolved quicker. I hope they will [apply this] at home and all throughout the rest of their schooling. I hope they will carry it into their work place. I don't know if they can but I hope they can use those skills their whole lives."

Teacher H

"Well, after you presented the lesson a couple of girls had a problem and they started to come to me and then they realized that they could go to The Peace Rug. One was holding the other's hand

and they went and sat down on The Peace Rug and they must have solved it because they came back to me and told me they had solved it and they were friends again. So, we use it more on the playground. I have a few that still want me to be involved and I will ask them if they told the person to stop and if not try that and then we will go to The Peace Rug and talk it out. I have not had to do a whole lot since you presented the lesson. There were a couple times I had to take a couple of kids over and teach them how to say I'm sorry and what they are sorry for, naming the problem. And they always end with a handshake. I think it [experience] was really positive. I think that a lot of these kids don't get a lot of positive modeling social interaction. They see a lot of yelling and hitting. This is a positive way to solve their problems instead of tattling. They have the power to solve the problem themselves. I think to them it is really freeing when they come and that they are excited that they fixed it and that they are friends. I would say it is a very good strategy for conflict management. I wish I would have [sic] had one when I taught the older kids, especially fourth and fifth grades. That would have been helpful to teach them. Even at the level in a private Christian school, they didn't have the skills to know how to solve their problems. [About change in the number of incidences of conflict] The number has gone down. I still have a few that still have issues going on. But for the most part...it has

gone down. I don't have nearly as many girls coming up to me saying they are having problems with other girls saying they don't want to be friends. I would say that it has gone down eighty to ninety percent. They are definitely more helpful and cooperative with each other. They are more encouraging with each other. They go out of their way to be friends with each other now and to help each other. I think it is good that we started this young especially with these types of kids who obviously aren't getting the social skills at home. These are the high risk kids and to start conflict management this early could eventually keep them out of gangs and keeping them off the streets so it could have a good long term effect. I can use it in my house. There are several people in my family I can take to The Peace Rug. I've heard them use the same terminology talking about how they took their brother aside or something like that at home and talked things out using The Peace Rug process, even though they don't have the actual rug."

Teacher I

"We use The Peace Rug in the classroom but we use The Peace Rug ideas in other places. Like, for instance, just the other day we had an incident on the playground. We had three boys that came up to me and told me about something that was going on. I sent them to the back because The Peace Rug was there and told them to get one story and bring me one story about what happened and then come to me and tell me what was going on. Well, this one [sic] we

did use a Peace Rug. Then they got together and everyone was so mad when they got together, and then when they got together and started talking about it they told me that one person was nominated to talk about it. We talked about it in class what the other children thought about the conflict and see who was wrong and what was wrong about it. Of course the anger had disappeared once they got on The Peace Rug and started talking about it. The kids put in their input with me and we all worked together to try to understand what had happened and why it was not an acceptable sequence. We use The Peace Rug process in different situations. The children are learning to talk. I really think they are learning to talk about things. I think that a lot of times the teachers still have to initiate the kids to go to The Peace Rug but sometimes the kids are asking each other to go talk about things. Usually, though I think that the teachers suggest they go talk about it. It is just so amazing to see two kids just so upset and you send them to talk about it and they come back and they are both smiling. They've worked it out. Most of the time I will say, 'Do I need to get into this?' and they will say no. Everybody usually ends up happy. They learned the words to use at The Peace Rug and we work with them on that. I don't have to direct them when they get there and I don't have to pay attention to what they are saying because they know what to do. They have learned enough [sic] what to do to get the dialogue going. It

doesn't take them long either. A few minutes later they have worked it out. It is an idea that they don't see too often, something that they can use to get their point across, that they don't see a lot of at home or whatever. It is such a simple idea but it is not used a lot, to sit down and talk about it and I am afraid that our parents don't use a lot of those sit down and talk about it things. I don't think our children see that. Of course, our parents take another route. They'll get mad and start fighting. They won't just sit down and talk about it. It is so simple and yet it can have such an impact that they can just sit down and talk about it. I have been using it a while. You were teaching that before we actually got a rug in my room. I am not having to settle a lot of arguments. That is just part of the way I handle things. It is hard to say that anything has changed because I don't remember what we were doing before. I remember that I was stressed trying to figure out what was going on with the kids before but now I just have them talk about it. It is hard to remember back that far [over three years] because I don't really remember what we did before. So it is hard to remember what kind of changes may have occurred. I like that we can use it out on the playground and it has cut down on the number of children that need to go to it at recess. It just makes a world of difference. It is a simple idea but it can make such a profound impact and I think it does. I think that the students apply it and I

think the parents need to be applying it in the homes. We could use it a lot more at home.”

Teacher J

“I use it just for confrontations in the classroom or any problems that my children need to get out or anytime they need to talk to a friend or clear the air with. I believe they are very familiar with it because they have used it in kindergarten and in first grade. I think the visuals that you gave them really helped them a lot. It [student’s experience] was definitely positive. They would like to tell me how they worked their problems out and what they did and all that so it was very positive. Well, student teaching and other experiences, we really never were taught to be able to deal with the problems. I like that the students are taught to communicate their problems with each other and work things out for themselves. The past two months, there were two girls that were always bickering and picking on each other. I think now we have pretty much gotten that taken care of by sending them to The Peace Rug. Now I don’t hear about any confrontations. They just go to The Peace Rug and take care of it. We just have to say go to The Peace Rug. They used to do a lot of tattling but now they just go and take care of it themselves. They know what to do so they don’t have to come to me to settle a problem. I think everybody is more of a community and it feels more like a family now. Everyone feels very close. Pretty much it doesn’t even have to be for conflicts. I have some

kids who are having problems like a father is in jail or something and they want to talk to a friend about it they go to the rug and talk about things. It is a good place for them to go to talk about their problems and it helps teach the other kids about empathy and I have been teaching them about it. I am really pleased with it. When I first came here I was like, Peace Rug, what is it? But I really like having it in the classroom. They [students] will be better off as grown ups and adults being able to work out their problems instead of fighting and arguing so they will have the knowledge to work things out in a good way.”

Teacher K

“Actually my classroom is the timeout room. It would be a time that I would be there with the children and ask them to go to The Peace Rug to work out their problems. The students learned the procedures and they were easy to learn. I think, to me, the biggest part that helps the children is that they learn to communicate about what the problem is. A lot of times we tell children to go work it out but we don’t give them the language to communicate with each other. So I think that is the biggest part of it. I think [what has changed for me is] the part that we need to get the children to know, so that they will automatically know what they need to do to work something out. There has been a change in the number of incidents of conflict since the children started using The Peace Rug. The children use the language even when an adult isn’t

present. The language part gives a common language for the teachers and students to communicate with. I just think it is a very positive thing. These are things [skills] that they can take with them. It isn't just about the rug. These are skills they can use wherever they go."

Teacher L

"My son was at a different school and came home talking about a problem with a friend. I asked him what he did about it. He said that they went to The Peace Rug. I was so surprised that they had a Peace Rug at his school because we have had it here and I knew all about it. And he could tell me all of the steps to do at The Peace Rug and how to work it out. They always end with a handshake or a high five. I think that he liked having The Peace Rug because he could be in charge of fixing his behavior and he could go over there and work it out without the teacher having to mediate it. After that we could talk to him about The Peace Rug, what he needed, and how we could use them at home. I have used it here at school but since he had heard about it somewhere else we could now use it and talk about it and help us solve conflicts at home. The parents and students: it gives them power to solve their own problems. Given that responsibility they really step up to the plate to solve problems on their own rather than someone else trying to solve them. It gives the students power to solve their problems that they didn't have before and then with the model, they know what

to do when they get there and then they know when it's finished. They know what to do and how to resolve their problem and then go on with their day. This way it doesn't go on and on. Without The Peace Rug you don't resolve it and so it goes on and on throughout the day and causes little problems all day. With this tool, they can move on and get back to what they need to do. I think now that they know how to use it here, they can take that communication skill home with them even though they don't have a rug at their house. They can still work out their problems using the techniques they have learned here."

Teacher M

"It is especially beneficial to me for the students to settle their conflicts without intervention from me or the parapro [paraprofessional] and to handle the conflicts in a diplomatic way. I think children, at an early age, need to be aware of how hurtful their derogatory comments are to each other. Going to The Peace Rug gives them time to think about their actions and gives them time to cool off. The students learned the procedures and we practice it in the room because Mrs. McIntosh suggested that we do that. When we had a crisis at first, I would sit in and help them out but soon they figured out what they were supposed to do and I didn't even need to be involved with the dispute. Going to The Peace Rug gives them a chance to feel empathy for the other person and they learn self control. I think that these things, like

anger management, are skills that they need to take with them, especially as adults instead of hitting and lashing out. They need to sit down and talk about it first. As a classroom teacher it really helps me because most of the time [with] younger children, I can't figure out 'who started what' when they are in a disagreement. If I can leave [sic] them to be responsible for their actions, I don't have to be the mediator. Most of the time it is something insignificant but it can escalate to something really big. So it just takes a big burden off of me if the children can solve it themselves. I think it has cut down on the tattling. I also think as a classroom they became better friends. Some kids have personalities that clash automatically but I think that it has helped them understand each other. I think that it is important that they use the word "I": the kids take responsibility and saying how they feel and what they would like helps diffuse the situation because using the word "you" automatically sets tempers aflame [sic]. I think Mrs. McIntosh should be commended for it because it has really helped an elementary school and I have had parents say they have used it at home. I have also used it with my kids and grandkids so there is some carryover. You don't always have a teacher or an adult around so it gives them a way to talk about the problem and how they feel. This is something that people young and old need to be able to do to work out their problems or avoid future problems."

Teacher N

“It has been used in lots of classrooms that I have been in [as a classroom paraprofessional]. And it has been very effective. The kids go to The Peace Rug and they generally talk about what made them mad and they usually solve the problem within two or three minutes and then they go back and sit down and start doing their work again. It is an effective way to nip the problem in the bud. Very easy to learn. I think it was a very positive experience. It taught them that hitting, kicking, and biting are not acceptable and that you can resolve things using words and quickly and effectively just by talking out the situation. I thought it was very effective. When I did use it, it was very effective and useful. It kind of teaches the kids a moral lesson and how to deal with problems. It teaches them how to deal with things on a social level. And I think that is a very important part of education in general. It really does teach them how to resolve conflict and it is problem solving and the kids learn from it. It's problem solving. It's teaching you how to deal with real life situations in general and how to work through things in a peaceful manner and not overreact and pitch a fit or throw a tantrum. It is teaching them day to day what they are going to go through and the best way to approach the situation.”

Teacher O

“I think it is a wonderful technique and a wonderful use of material. I think it gives the children something concrete to begin their thought process. I think it helps children and adults to have a

place for thinking and working things out. I think that is one of the wonderful things about young students is that they learn procedures easily and they want structure in their lives. I don't remember particular situations that would have precipitated me needing to go to The Peace Rug but it was always interesting to me how they would explain to someone else that they needed to go to The Peace Rug and work things out. We never really needed to tell them to go. I loved it. That is what thrilled me is when they started to assume that responsibility. I think it brought about changes. It was a game at first in that they wanted to go to The Peace Rug so we would create situations. As we used it more and I became more adept at using the proper terminology we learned that it could be a healing thing and not just a game. It was a way to get themselves under control. It was sort of a step forward for the children later on to go to somebody and just find a place and not need the rug anymore which is what it was supposed to do. I want to talk all afternoon [about] what I have learned from you. This is one of the things, to give the children ownership of the problem and ways to mediate problems. It helped me learn language to help children talk through situations and with my own children. It works beautifully. I know we had a sub today and she talked about how well the children got along together and I have to attribute a lot of my success with children to the techniques that you have taught

and that have come from this. You need to know that. You have been a wonderful influence on so many of us. I think we could do it but you have given us another language. It is wonderful at the kindergarten level and The Peace Rug is a safe place for someone to not just work out their problems but it is also a place for students to go and think about things and process things. It has sort of turned into my counseling area. I think the design of the rug is beautiful with the clouds on it because it really gives a sense of peace. Remember I told you that I had a student at the beginning of the year that was going to be a mountain for me to conquer? Well, I would love for you to see him now because he is a success story and much of it was singular use of The Peace Rug. He was a different child at the end of the year and it was self-growth but I think we helped him and I think this was an important piece of the puzzle. The design of it is perfect. I think having something like this in an area being used by a lot of people sends a message that this is a place for peace and a place for respect for each other and respect for self and that this is the kind of behavior, interaction, and environment that this place is. I like to think that it is a calming influence that it is just in the room. I think it has a visual impact on people. I think it has a feeling impact as well. It is a carpet, its soft. I have seen children get on it and run their fingers through it. It appeals to the senses of touch and sight. It gives you a

peaceful feeling. Just looking at the design in the catalog [Shaw] I stared at the design because I liked it so much. It was a good feeling. I don't know if it was a connection with you but I liked it. I remember leaving the catalog open to that page while I was having my coffee one morning. I think that is a pretty good endorsement. Last year and this year I have not had the troubled children that I had when you first created this but at the time we were working together and we were talking through its design, I had children who greatly benefited. I think those children involved their parents. This one little boy that I already mentioned told me that he told his mom about The Peace Rug. And I am sure that he wished he could get his daddy on The Peace Rug. That is a testament to it. This boy achieved this at school and he wanted to take it home to his parents and have that structure in his life because he didn't have it there."

Teacher P

"I have used it over several years. I usually do some introduction of it at the beginning of the year doing some sort of classroom meeting sort of setting. I usually use some role-playing and talk about how it is used. I role-play with them as one of the characters in conflict and act that out and talk about how it is used. Then it finds its spot in the classroom and we put it there and use it when needed. It doesn't get used a lot, not even on a weekly basis. But when it is needed they never balk about going there. They always

go there to resolve their problems and do what they are supposed to do. They always come back and check with me and sometimes I can debrief more than others. So we know what it is for. We know how to use it. I think it is helpful. I think the general rule is that they leave with smiles on their faces so it is a positive thing. Most of the time they are able to verbalize something and if it is a matter of one being the victim and the other being the aggressor then they are able to say that I am sorry. I usually ask for the plan and ask how they feel about each other now and they make that plan and go on. I can't remember a time when something resolved on The Peace Rug didn't get resolved. Some classes [over the years] seem to have more bickering than others, but some of the things that I have set up in my classroom like no tattling ...[but] students still come to me telling me so and so did this. So I tell them they need to work it out and go to The Peace Rug. I tell them they need to use words to solve their problem. And they do it. The Glasser system was in place before The Peace Rug was but The Peace Rug gave it a reality spot. It gave it a place and made it visible. It made it an active something that was on a higher scale than just words. The fact that it is called a Peace Rug gives it the expectation that when you work something out you are at peace. I have a great story. Early this year the kids had come in from recess. Two girls were in conflict about a ring. One girl said that the other girl had

taken her ring. So I sent them to the Peace Rug to handle it because they knew what to do and how to take care of it. Well, they came back a few minutes later and it was not resolved. Well, I sat down with them and put the story back together. Well, I found out who gave the one girl the ring. I had to go and get another student from another class who had given to the other girl and get all of this straightened out. As it turns out, the original owner of the ring had dropped it at recess and the third party had found it and given it as a gift to the current owner of it. After we talked it out they knew who it should go to even though they were a little sheepish about it. So they gave it to the original owner and it got resolved. But it was so nice to do that in that setting and I think the girls saw how it worked and they all left feeling just fine. Teachers get so much thrown at them; the first reaction is against change. The fact of the matter is, I don't spend much time trying to teach how to use it but it works without much instruction. I guess an extension of that would be to use The Peace Rug at home. I haven't really encouraged that but I guess I should. I think it would be good to spend some time teaching parents about it more. It would be good to talk about how they can apply it to other situations."

Teacher Q

"The students learned the procedures. Some children use it more than others. Some feel the need to express themselves more than others. The ones that do use it seems like it benefits them by

getting their feelings out and discuss the problem and letting them come to a decision and get on by being friends. It gives them a happier time in their day. Two girls were having a hard time getting along and they came to my office. They knew they needed to go to The Peace Rug because I had them before. I think by the end of the year they understood each other better and were able to get along better. They knew that they had to change their behavior and enjoy each other's company more. Children realize now that they don't need a mediator. They can solve the problems on their own in a few minutes so I don't have to do much mediating anymore. I hope they can see that they don't need the actual rug in their home to use these same things at their house with their friends and family. Maybe it will help them understand other people's feelings. It could change their attitudes with everybody and help them understand how to get along with everybody better."

Teacher R

"[I have used The Peace Rug] More last year than this year. I think last year was more of a novelty. This year I think it is more important to them. Last year's class was more willing to ask me. This year I just told them it is open to be used when you need it. They can go back and use it as long as I am not teaching. The girls seem more willing to use it than the boys. I don't know if that is because girls are more willing to open up than boys. I use it with my child too. He had a problem with another child at school telling

him that he hated him. I asked him if he knew what to do and he said he did but they didn't have a Peace Rug at his school. I told him that was just a piece of carpet, [and] you can go anywhere to talk about it. They even use the big Peace Rug on the playground. So I think they learned the procedures and it gives them a way to express themselves. I think you do a really good job of coming in and explaining them and teaching them how to use this as conflict resolution instead of fists. I think it is positive because if we don't model things like this then they don't have a way to express themselves. I think The Peace Rug has offered them a way to express themselves with teachers as well as other students. I think that it has even flowed over to the home where a lot of the students don't have good role models. As a teacher it has made me use it for conflict resolution and made me put it more on the kids and less on me to solve their problems. I think it is better for them to solve their own problems than when we go interfere. Because if we teach them to solve their own problems and think for themselves, then they can transpose that to their learning. I think it [incidences] has definitely dropped. I don't see as much of it this year as last. And I don't see as much of the bickering back and forth. The kids talk through their problems. There is more working through problems than at other schools. At some of the other schools I have taught at we usually just sent kids to the principal but we don't have many

fight here. It makes it a more peaceful place. We are in a bad neighborhood in this school and it gives the kids a chance to be in a more peaceful place. Conflict resolution is a real big thing: talking out problems, a quiet place to go think. Some kids just go there to read because it is calming. If we look at the climate sometimes I think we need a calming place other than the timeout room. I think that it is less stressful than leaving the classroom. I think they can apply it to their life. A lot of them have older brothers and sisters involved with situations that make them uncomfortable and nervous. They may need to talk to them or their parents about it. My son is an example too. I taught him to use the conversation of The Peace Rug at home and with his brother. His dad wanted him to handle things the manly way with that kid that said he hated him, but I taught him about what we learned last year. I told him we had a better way to handle it. I can see some of these children doing it. One girl said she would like it if her parents could use it [The Peace Rug]. I wish we could give them a rug to take home to solve their problems.”

Teacher S

“[I have used The Peace Rug] A lot. It is nice because it helps them [students] learn to take responsibility for their problems instead of having someone else take responsibility for them. Now they are in the habit of - when they have a problem - they will tap someone on the shoulder and ask them to go to The Peace Rug

with them and talk about the problem. Or if you hurt my feelings they know they needed to go to The Peace Rug and when they get up they know to shake hands or give each other a hug or something like that. The students learned the procedures quickly. They liked it because it made them feel grown up and more responsible. And we even had someone who knew they [sic] had hurt someone's feelings so they asked the other person to go to The Peace Rug and apologize for hurting their feelings. I tell them to think about what they need to do and then go take care of it. So they call them over and go and work it out. We didn't have a Peace Rug in my house but I told my children they had to be responsible for their acts when they had done something good or bad because it isn't mommy's job to take care of their problems. It is their job to fix their mistakes. So we didn't have the actual rug but we had a similar structure at home. It changed them in the classroom in that they didn't want to go to The Peace Rug because at first they knew they had done something wrong but when they got it and understood what it was for, they would go there and be very responsible and take the initiative on their own. They will raise their hand and say they need to go to The Peace Rug. So they have the initiative to get out there and fix their problems. I think it is a positive thing because it makes them take responsibility. I think it really does help them build their character and teaches them what

they need to do and what not to do and how to respond to other children in the classroom. They do it at home. They talk about how they use it at home and how they don't have an actual rug but they use the conversations. They bring their parents to the classroom and show them the rug and tell them that they work out their problems there and they want to do that at home."

Teacher T

[Teacher who was at Roan for the first two years of its use and is now at another school.] "I don't have a Peace Rug but I have a rug you gave me [from years ago before The Peace Rug was manufactured] so we use it. The children have practiced the procedure from the card that you gave me and after six weeks or so they know the format themselves so if they have a conflict they know how to work things out for themselves. I think it has been just great. I think it is really going to help them grow as individuals and eventually they will bring it into their own home. I have just used the procedures in my own life so it has helped put things into perspective so I think that using the procedure for The Peace Rug has helped me in life. I have seen a reduction of incidences of conflict in my classroom because right when there is a conflict they will try to work it out and talk it out but if they can't talk it out then they come to me and I tell them to go over to the rug and work it out. I hardly ever have to intervene anymore because they know what they have to do. [Have been using it] Ever since you

came up with it. I just really think handling things in the way that The Peace Rug teaches you to handle it really seems to help the children put things into perspective and in order of the different stages to work out their conflicts better. I have always thought it was a wonderful idea. I have used it every year and at the beginning of the year we go over the procedures so that they will know how to use it. We do that for the first six weeks of class so after that they know what to do on their own. I think it is important that it becomes a part of our routine.”

Teacher U

[Resource Special Education room]

“We have talked about it some and the children know what it is for if they need to use it. The children that we have with behavior problems have a behavior management plan so we go with that first and then we tell them if they have another problem they can go to The Peace Rug as a secondary measure. I think it has been positive because they know what it is for when they have been in a spat so they can go there and resolve their problems [sic] which is good. There are not a lot of changes because of the interventions that we have so we don’t have a lot of children misbehaving. The children are always busy because it is very structured so they don’t have any time to misbehave. They know it is there so it is always an option for them. I think it has been a good thing, a very positive thing. I even use it with my own child and he will tell me we need

to go to The Peace Rug. I think that all children see it as a place where they can go and solve problems. I think that the children we have in here have so many issues going on with them that The Peace Rug is a happy place to resolve their problems. I think they can take that into other situations. The one EBD child that we have in the morning has trouble in the regular classroom but she does utilize it there so I think they can take it with them.”

Teacher V

“It has been used many times in my classroom. It has been used for all the little squabbles that kids need to learn how to work out by themselves. It is used to prevent classroom interruption. It is used as a tool to teach children how to solve their problems they need to learn to get along in the world. I can’t think of a day that has gone by that I haven’t told someone that it sounds like they need to use The Peace Rug. I just don’t want it to become a negative thing. I like to suggest, firmly sometimes. I have never had them say no. Occasionally I have had to go over and tell them I think they are getting off track and they need to get back to what they are there for. They do get back on track and use it well. I think their initial experience is they think they can’t do this; they don’t want to do this; it is embarrassing, but when they get there and sit down and listen to each other, they realize how valuable it is. They learn from it and they learn that what they do affects people in more ways than they can imagine. The procedures are clear cut and

simple enough for a kindergartener to learn because my daughter first told me about it when it was first used here and I didn't even know what it was. She uses it with my husband so that they can talk out their differences or problems when she has done something wrong or she has something she wants to talk to him about. She and my son sit down and use the Peace Rug and talk things out. So it has changed my life at home and it has changed my life at school. It cuts out so much tattling and interrupting the class for mundane little things and it also cuts out the hurt because they can talk it out about how much it hurts. I think that one thing that is important to know is that once kids use The Peace Rug they want to use The Peace Rug. I don't have to ask them to go they want to go and will ask me if they can go. It amazes me that they will ask if they can go because they need to go and they know they need to go. It is great because they know they can voice their opinion and they won't be looked at negatively. There is no negative from it and that is good. It can be used in all sorts of situations both at home or here at school. Whether someone broke someone else's pencil or something serious happened, it can be used anywhere. It is a wonderful thing. There are not enough of them around."

Teacher W

"[The Peace Rug has been used] A lot. And even from the first time that you came before you actually had the cloud rug. It is

good when you first come in at the beginning of the year, when you come in and teach the students and the teachers how to use it. I even take the children from time to time over to it and direct them what they need to do. There are children that will do it on their own most of the time but every once in a while I have to encourage them to go to The Peace Rug and take care of it. I had a couple of boys a few weeks ago that were having trouble getting along with each other and so I told them to go and take care of it and so they did. After they were done [sic] talking about it they couldn't decide whether to hug or shake hands. I didn't have to tell them what to say. They ended up happy with each other. They don't do it as often now because we have a really good class and get along well with each other. At the beginning they were doing it all the time just over little stuff. They do know the procedures and how to go about starting it and all that and follow the procedures. I think it was a great experience for them. Because it is the same ones who in the beginning would go to it for major problems or for little things. I think it is a great experience for them. One girl told me they had talked to their little brother or sister on The Peace Rug, which they don't have, but using something else. So it must be a great experience for them to be using it at home. It has changed a lot for me. I am a strict teacher but I don't yell and scream but they know that I expect them to follow the rules and we set the rules

together at the beginning of the year. When I first started teaching I probably raised my voice more and told them what to do instead of letting them work things out for themselves. So I think that I changed a lot because of it. I have even used it because I will take them over there and tell them that I don't like what they are doing and I would like them to stop and would they please stop and they will just sit there and listen and say yes. I just think it has changed the climate because of the way you handle problems in the classroom. They get along and that has a good bit to do with it but all children can't get along all the time so they do know it's there so that has changed their perception of how to get along better with others. We haven't had any major problems, really. It is a great place for them to go and quietly work things out. It gives you a peaceful classroom. There are problems from time to time but not too bad. The thoughts or feelings I have is that I am glad that you came up with it. There is just so much in the children's lives and in the world so I think it is a really good way for them to find out there is a better way to solve their problems other than just hitting. I think it is great and I will continue to use it. And I think the children have already applied it, like I said, about the little girl who took it home. If they are using it at home, that is an actual situation. In a few years when they are older, that will be something they can use their whole lives."

Teacher X

“Oh yes, yes it has [been used in classroom]. We had a situation with a student who lost control, physical control, so we had to sit him out and let him think about his behavior before we could let him come back in with the rest of the students. We just use it occasionally when a student needs to think about what they are doing. Sometimes two or more students go and talk about their problems but usually it is just one single situation when we use it on one child. It does have a positive effect in the classroom. Sometimes a child will come to me said they know they are supposed to do this or my hands need to stay to myself or basically they know if they have a problem they need to come to the rug.”

Teacher Y

“It is used daily in my kindergarten classroom. It is one of the main structures that we use for the children to go and think about what they have done and it is a very good asset in the classroom. At the beginning we had a class meeting and we talked about the vocabulary and how they should say things to help them think about what they have done. We sort of role modeled the questions you should ask one another. The procedures were easy for them to learn. One thing they say a lot of is ‘please stop.’ Their experience to me has been that they have to realize that this is an area where they can go and sit for a few minutes and get themselves back under control and that they can think about what they have done and talk over with another individual about the things they have

done. It is a neat idea for thinking and talking with one another about problems in the classroom.”

Teacher Z

“I actually took it home to use with my two boys. They are twelve and fourteen. They were having a lot of difficulty with confrontations at their age. So one night I told them that I was bringing home The Peace Rug for them to sit on and work out their problems. And I did and they looked at it in the trunk of the car and it showed them that I meant business. I felt relieved after the boys calmed down and started talking about it. I think they were shocked that I actually did bring it home because I had told them that I would bring it home and I don’t think they thought that I would. As far as in the classroom, I like it much better than sending a child to sit in a chair. Especially when there is a problem with more than one child and they can sit on the rug and work things out. It changed my boys’ behavior. I think just the fact that I brought it and showed them that I meant business and that I have a kindergarten class and you are way above that and you need to do this really helped. Well, I have just seen very good results in the children’s behavior. It gives them a secure place they can go to and think their problems through.”
